

## THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

# JEREMIAH

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## INTRODUCTION

JEREMIAH, son of Hilkiyah, one of the ordinary priests, dwelling in Anathoth of Benjamin (<sup><300></sup>Jeremiah 1:1), not the Hilkiyah the high priest who discovered the book of the law (<sup><1228></sup>2 Kings 22:8); had he been the same, the designation would have been “*the priest*”, or “*the high priest*”. Besides, his residence at Anathoth shows that he belonged to the line of Abiathar, who was deposed from the high priesthood by Solomon (<sup><1026></sup>1 Kings 2:26-35), after which the office remained in Zadok’s line. Mention occurs of Jeremiah in <sup><1635></sup>2 Chronicles 35:25 36:12,21. In 629 B.C. the thirteenth year of King Josiah, while still very young (<sup><2105></sup>Jeremiah 1:5), he received his prophetic call in Anathoth (<sup><2100></sup>Jeremiah 1:2); and along with Hilkiyah the high priest, the prophetess Huldah, and the prophet Zephaniah, he helped forward Josiah’s reformation of religion (<sup><1230></sup>2 Kings 23:1-25). Among the first charges to him was one that he should go and proclaim God’s message in Jerusalem (<sup><2100></sup>Jeremiah 2:2). He also took an official tour to announce to the cities of Judah the contents of the book of the law, found in the temple (<sup><2106></sup>Jeremiah 11:6) five years after his call to prophesy. On his return to Anathoth, his countrymen, offended at his reproofs, conspired against his life. To escape their persecutions (<sup><2112></sup>Jeremiah 11:21), as well as those of his own family (<sup><2106></sup>Jeremiah 12:6), he left Anathoth and resided at Jerusalem. During the eighteen years of his ministry in Josiah’s reign he was unmolested; also during the three months of Jehoahaz or Shallum’s reign (<sup><2210></sup>Jeremiah 22:10-12). On Jehoiakim’s accession it became evident that Josiah’s reformation effected nothing more than a forcible repression of idolatry and the establishment of the worship of God outwardly. The priests, prophets, and people then brought Jeremiah before the authorities, urging that he should be put to death for his denunciations of evil against the city (<sup><2318></sup>Jeremiah 26:8-11). The princes, however, especially Ahikam, interposed in his behalf (<sup><2316></sup>Jeremiah 26:16,24), but he was put under restraint, or at least deemed it prudent not to appear in public. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (606 B.C.), he was commanded to write the predictions

given orally through him, and to read them to the people. Being “shut up”, he could not himself go into the house of the Lord (<sup>2436</sup>Jeremiah 36:5); he therefore deputed Baruch, his amanuensis, to read them in public on the fast day. The princes thereupon advised Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves from the king’s displeasure. Meanwhile they read the roll to the king, who was so enraged that he cut it with a knife and threw it into the fire; at the same time giving orders for the apprehension of the prophet and Baruch. They escaped Jehoiakim’s violence, which had already killed the prophet Urijah (<sup>2437</sup>Jeremiah 26:20-23). Baruch rewrote the words, with additional prophecies, on another roll (<sup>2437</sup>Jeremiah 36:27-32). In the three months’ reign of Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, he prophesied the carrying away of the king and the queen mother (<sup>2438</sup>Jeremiah 13:18 22:24-30; compare <sup>2442</sup>2 Kings 24:12). In this reign he was imprisoned for a short time by Pashur (<sup>2440</sup>Jeremiah 20:1-18), the chief governor of the Lord’s house; but at Zedekiah’s accession he was free (<sup>2440</sup>Jeremiah 37:4), for the king sent to him to “inquire of the Lord” when Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem (<sup>2440</sup>Jeremiah 21:1-3, etc. <sup>2478</sup>Jeremiah 37:3). The Chaldeans drew off on hearing of the approach of Pharaoh’s army (<sup>2475</sup>Jeremiah 37:5); but Jeremiah warned the king that the Egyptians would forsake him, and the Chaldeans return and burn up the city (<sup>2470</sup>Jeremiah 37:7,8). The princes, irritated at this, made the departure of Jeremiah from the city during the respite a pretext for imprisoning him, on the allegation of his deserting to the Chaldeans (<sup>2480</sup>Jeremiah 38:1-5). He would have been left to perish in the dungeon of Malchiah, but for the intercession of Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian (<sup>2480</sup>Jeremiah 38:6-13). Zedekiah, though he consulted Jeremiah in secret yet was induced by his princes to leave Jeremiah in prison (<sup>2484</sup>Jeremiah 38:14-28) until Jerusalem was taken. Nebuchadnezzar directed his captain, Nebuzar-adan, to give him his freedom, so that he might either go to Babylon or stay with the remnant of his people as he chose. As a true patriot, notwithstanding the forty and a half years during which his country had repaid his services with neglect and persecution, he stayed with Gedaliah, the ruler appointed by Nebuchadnezzar over Judea (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 40:6). After the murder of Gedaliah by Ishmael, Johanan, the recognized ruler of the people, in fear of the Chaldeans avenging the murder of Gedaliah, fled with the people to Egypt, and forced Jeremiah and Baruch to accompany him, in spite of the prophet’s warning that the people should perish if they went to Egypt, but be preserved by remaining in their land (<sup>2490</sup>Jeremiah 41:1-43:13). At Tahpanhes, a boundary city on the Tanitic or Pelustan branch of the Nile, he prophesied the overthrow of Egypt (<sup>2488</sup>Jeremiah 43:8-13). Tradition says he died in Egypt. According to the PSEUDO-EPIPHANIUS, he was stoned at Taphnae or Tahpanhes. The Jews so venerated him that they believed he would rise from the dead and be the forerunner of Messiah (<sup>2464</sup>Matthew 16:14).

HAVERNICK observes that the combination of features in Jeremiah's character proves his divine mission; mild, timid, and susceptible of melancholy, yet intrepid in the discharge of his prophetic functions, not sparing the prince any more than the meanest of his subjects — the Spirit of prophecy controlling his natural temper and qualifying him for his hazardous undertaking, without doing violence to his individuality. Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Daniel, and Ezekiel were his contemporaries. The last forms a good contrast to Jeremiah, the Spirit in his case acting on a temperament as strongly marked by firmness as Jeremiah's was by shrinking and delicate sensitiveness. Ezekiel views the nation's sins as opposed to righteousness — Jeremiah, as productive of misery; the former takes the objective, the latter the subjective, view of the evils of the times. Jeremiah's style corresponds to his character: he is peculiarly marked by pathos, and sympathy with the wretched; his Lamentations illustrate this; the whole series of elegies has but one object — to express sorrow for his fallen country; yet the lights and images in which he presents this are so many, that the reader, so far from feeling it monotonous, is charmed with the variety of the plaintive strains throughout. The language is marked by Aramaeisms, which probably was the ground of JEROME'S charge that the style is "rustic". LOWTH denies the charge and considers him in portions not inferior to Isaiah. His heaping of phrase on phrase, the repetition of stereotyped forms — and these often *three times* — are due to his affected feelings and to his desire to intensify the expression of them; he is at times more concise, energetic, and sublime, especially against foreign nations, and in the rhythmical parts.

The principle of the arrangement of his prophecies is hard to ascertain. The order of kings was — Josiah (under whom he prophesied eighteen years), Jehoahaz (three months), Jehoiakim (eleven years), Jeconiah (three months), Zedekiah (eleven years). But his prophecies under Josiah (the first through twentieth chapters) are immediately followed by a portion under Zedekiah (the twenty-first chapter). Again, <sup>2418</sup>Jeremiah 24:8-10, as to Zedekiah, comes in the midst of the section as to Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jeconiah (the twenty-second, twenty-third, twenty-fifth chapters, etc.) So the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth chapters as to Jehoiakim, follow the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, thirty-third, thirty-fourth chapters, as to Zedekiah; and the forty-fifth chapter, dated the fourth year of Jehoiakim, comes after predictions as to the Jews who fled to Egypt after the overthrow of Jerusalem. EWALD thinks the present arrangement substantially Jeremiah's own; the various portions are prefaced by the same formula, "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord" (<sup>2419</sup>Jeremiah 7:1 11:1 18:1 <sup>2420</sup>Jeremiah 21:1 25:1 30:1 32:1 34:1,8 35:1 40:1 44:1; compare <sup>2441</sup>Jeremiah 14:1 46:1 47:1 49:34). Notes of time mark other

divisions more or less historical (<sup>260E</sup>Jeremiah 26:1 27:1 36:1 37:1). Two other portions are distinct of themselves (<sup>249E</sup>Jeremiah 29:1 45:1). The second chapter has the shorter introduction which marks the beginning of a strophe; the third chapter seems imperfect, having as the introduction merely “saying” (<sup>248E</sup>Jeremiah 3:1, *Hebrew*). Thus in the poetical parts, there are twenty-three sections divided into strophes of from seven to nine verses, marked some way thus, “The Lord said also unto me”. They form five books: I. The Introduction, first chapter II. Reproofs of the Jews, the second through twenty-fourth chapters, made up of seven sections:

- (1) the second chapter
- (2) the third through sixth chapters;
- (3) the seventh through tenth chapters;
- (4) the eleventh through thirteenth chapters;
- (5) the fourteenth through seventeenth chapters;
- (6) the seventeenth through nineteenth and twentieth chapters;
- (7) the twenty-first through twenty-fourth chapters.

III. Review of all nations in two sections: the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth through forty-ninth chapters, with a historical appendix of three sections,

- (1) the twenty-sixth chapter;
- (2) the twenty-seventh chapter;
- (3) the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters.

IV. Two sections picturing the hopes of *brighter times*,

- (1) the thirtieth and thirty-first chapters;
- (2) the thirty-second and thirty-third chapters;

and an historical appendix in three sections:

- (1) <sup>260E</sup>Jeremiah 34:1-7;
- (2) <sup>260E</sup>Jeremiah 34:8-22;
- (3) <sup>261E</sup>Jeremiah 35:1-19.

V. The conclusion, in two sections:

- (1) <sup>261E</sup>Jeremiah 36:2;

(2) <sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 45:1-5.

Subsequently, in Egypt, he added <sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 46:13-26 to the previous prophecy as to Egypt; also the three sections, the thirty-seventh through thirty-ninth chapters; fortieth through forty-third chapters; and forty-fourth chapter. The fifty-second chapter was probably (see <sup><2506></sup>Jeremiah 51:64) an appendix from a later hand, taken from <sup><2248></sup>2 Kings 24:18, etc. <sup><2250></sup>2 Kings 25:30. The prophecies against the several foreign nations stand in a different order in the *Hebrew* from that of the *Septuagint*; also the prophecies against them in the *Hebrew* (the forty-sixth through fifty-first chapters) are in the *Septuagint* placed after <sup><2254></sup>Jeremiah 25:14, forming the twenty-sixth and thirty-first chapters; the remainder of the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Hebrew* is the thirty-second chapter of the *Septuagint*. Some passages in the *Hebrew* (<sup><2279></sup>Jeremiah 27:19-22 33:14-26 39:4-14 <sup><2485></sup>Jeremiah 48:45-47) are not found in the *Septuagint*; the *Greek* translators must have had a different recension before them; probably an earlier one. The *Hebrew* is probably the latest and fullest edition from Jeremiah's own hand. See on <sup><2253></sup>Jeremiah 25:13.

The canonicity of his prophecies is established by quotations of them in the New Testament (see <sup><4127></sup>Matthew 2:17 16:14 <sup><3808></sup>Hebrews 8:8-12; on <sup><4129></sup>Matthew 27:9, see on *Introduction to Zechariah*); also by the testimony of Ecclesiasticus 49:7, which quotes <sup><2010></sup>Jeremiah 1:10; of PHILO, who quotes his word as an "oracle"; and of the list of canonical books in MELITO, ORIGEN, JEROME, and the Talmud.

# CHAPTER 1

## Jeremiah 1:1-19.

### THE GENERAL TITLE OR INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah 1:1-3, probably prefixed by Jeremiah, when he collected his prophecies and gave them to his countrymen to take with them to Babylon [MICHAELIS].

**1. *Anathoth*** — a town in Benjamin, twenty stadia, that is, two or three miles north of Jerusalem; now Anata (compare Isaiah 10:30, and the context, Isaiah 10:28-32). One of the four cities allotted to the Kohathites in Benjamin (Joshua 21:18). Compare 1 Kings 2:26,27; a stigma was cast thenceforth on the whole sacerdotal family resident there; this may be alluded to in the words here, “the priests ... in Anathoth.” God chooses “the weak, base, and despised things ... to confound the mighty.”

**2, 3. *Jehoiakim ... Josiah ... Zedekiah*** — Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin are omitted for they reigned only three months each. The first and last of the kings under whom each prophet prophesied are often thus specified in the general title. See on these kings, and Jeremiah’s life, my *Introduction*.

***thirteenth ... of his reign*** — (Jeremiah 25:3).

***fifth month*** — (2 Kings 25:8).

**4-10. *Jeremiah’s call to the prophetic office.***

***unto me*** — other manuscripts read “to him”; but *English Version* probably represents the true *Hebrew* text; this inscription was doubtless made by Jeremiah himself.

**5. *knew*** — approved of thee as My chosen instrument (Exodus 33:12,17; compare Isaiah 49:1,5 Romans 8:29).

***sanctified*** — rather, “separated.” The primary meaning is, “to set apart” from a common to a special use; hence arose the secondary sense, “to sanctify,” ceremonially and morally. It is not here meant that Jehovah cleansed Jeremiah from original sin or regenerated him by His Spirit; but separated him to his peculiar *prophetic office*, including in its range, not merely the Hebrews, but also the nations hostile to them (Jeremiah

25:12-38 27:46-51), [HENDERSON]. Not the effect, but the predestination in Jehovah's secret counsel, is meant by the sanctification here (compare <sup><015></sup>Luke 1:15,41 <sup><45></sup>Acts 15:18 <sup><015></sup>Galatians 1:15 <sup><011></sup>Ephesians 1:11).

6. From the long duration of his office (<sup><002></sup>Jeremiah 1:2,3 <sup><400></sup>Jeremiah 40:1, etc. <sup><448></sup>Jeremiah 43:8, etc.), it is supposed that he was at the time of his call under twenty-five years of age.

**child** — the same word is translated, “young man” (<sup><0052></sup>2 Samuel 18:5). The reluctance often shown by inspired ministers of God (<sup><040></sup>Exodus 4:10 6:12,30 Jon 1:3) to accept the call, shows that they did not assume the office under the impulse of self-deceiving fanaticism, as false prophets often did.

7. **to all that** — to all “to whom” [ROSENMULLER]. Rather, “to all *against* whom”; in a hostile sense (compare <sup><2008></sup>Jeremiah 1:8,17,18,19) [MAURER]. Such was the perversity of the rulers and people of Judea at that time, that whoever would desire to be a faithful prophet needed to arm himself with an intrepid mind; Jeremiah was naturally timid and sensitive; yet the Spirit moulded him to the necessary degree of courage without taking away his peculiar individuality.

8. (<sup><006></sup>Ezekiel 2:6 3:9).

**I am with thee** — (<sup><002></sup>Exodus 3:12 <sup><006></sup>Joshua 1:5).

9. **touched my mouth** — a symbolical act in supernatural vision, implying that God would give him *utterance*, notwithstanding *his* inability to speak (<sup><2008></sup>Jeremiah 1:6). So Isaiah's lips were touched with a living coal (<sup><2007></sup>Isaiah 6:7; compare <sup><2008></sup>Ezekiel 2:8,9,10 <sup><2106></sup>Daniel 10:16).

10. **set thee over** — literally, “appointed thee to the oversight.” He was to have his eye upon the nations, and to *predict* their destruction, or restoration, according as their conduct was bad or good. Prophets are said to *do* that which they *foretell* shall be done; for their word is God's word; and His word is His instrument whereby He doeth all things (<sup><0008></sup>Genesis 1:3 <sup><0006></sup>Psalms 33:6,9). Word and deed are one thing with Him. What His prophet *saith* is as certain as if it were *done*. The prophet's own consciousness was absorbed into that of God; so closely united to God did he feel himself, that Jehovah's words and deeds are described as his. In <sup><0028></sup>Jeremiah 31:28, God is said to do what Jeremiah here is represented as doing (compare <sup><2400></sup>Jeremiah 18:7 <sup><1197></sup>1 Kings 19:17 <sup><0028></sup>Ezekiel 43:3).

**root out** — (<sup><0153></sup>Matthew 15:13).

***pull down*** — change of metaphor to architecture (<sup>4704</sup>2 Corinthians 10:4). There is a play on the similar sounds, *lintbosh*, *linthotz*, in the *Hebrew* for “root out ... pull down.”

***build ... plant*** — restore upon their repenting. His predictions were to be chiefly, and in the first instance, denunciatory; therefore the destruction of the nations is put first, and with a greater variety of terms than their restoration.

**11. *rod*** — shoot, or branch.

***almond tree*** — literally, “the wakeful tree,” because it awakes from the sleep of winter earlier than the other trees, flowering in January, and bearing fruit in March; symbol of God’s *early* execution of His purpose; <sup>3012</sup>Jeremiah 1:12, “*hasten My word*” (compare <sup>3088</sup>Amos 8:3).

**12. *hasten*** — rather, “I will *be wakeful* as to My word,” etc.; alluding to <sup>3011</sup>Jeremiah 1:11, “the wakeful tree” [MAURER].

**13.** Another vision, signifying what is the “word” about to be “performed,” and by what instrumentality.

***seething*** — literally, “blown under”; so *boiling* by reason of the flame under it kept brisk by blowing. An Oriental symbol of a raging war.

***toward*** — rather, “*from* the north.” Literally, “from the face of the region situated towards the north” (compare <sup>3014</sup>Jeremiah 1:14,15) [MAURER]. The pot in the north rested on one side, its mouth being about to pour forth its contents southwards, namely, on Judea. Babylon, though east of Judea, was regarded by the Hebrews as north, because they appropriated the term “east” to Arabia-Deserta, stretching from Palestine to the Euphrates; or rather [BOCHART], the reference here is not to the site, but to the *route* of the Babylonians; not being able to cross the desert, they must enter the Holy Land by the northern frontier, through Riblah in Hamath (<sup>3015</sup>Jeremiah 39:5 52:9).

**14. *break forth*** — “shall disclose itself.”

***Out of the north*** — (<sup>3005</sup>Jeremiah 4:6 6:1,22 10:22 25:9 <sup>3007</sup>Ezekiel 26:7). The Chaldeans did not cast off the yoke of Assyria till several years after, under Nabopolassar, 625 B.C.; but long previously they had so increased as to threaten Assyria, which was now grown weak, and other neighboring peoples.



**15. *families*** — the tribes or clans composing the various kingdoms of Babylon; the specification of these aggravates the picture of calamity (<sup><228B></sup>Jeremiah 25:9).

***throne at ... gates*** — the usual place of administering *justice*. The conquering princes will set up their tribunal there (<sup><240B></sup>Jeremiah 39:3,5 52:9). Or the reference is to the military pavilion (<sup><243B></sup>Jeremiah 43:10) [MAURER].

**16. *utter*** — pronounce. *The judicial sentences, pronounced* against the Jews by the invading princes, would be virtually the “judgments of God” (<sup><230B></sup>Isaiah 10:5).

***works*** — idols.

**17. *gird ... loins*** — resolutely prepare for thy appointed task. Metaphor from the flowing robes worn in the East, which have to be *girt up* with a girdle, so as not to incommode one, when undertaking any active work (<sup><338B></sup>Job 38:3 <sup><212B></sup>Luke 12:35 <sup><411B></sup>1 Peter 1:13).

***dismayed ... confound*** — the same *Hebrew* word; literally, “to break.” Be not *dismayed* at their faces (before them), lest I make thee *dismayed* before their faces (before them), that is, “lest I should permit thee to be overcome by them” (compare <sup><248B></sup>Jeremiah 49:37).

**18. *defenced city***, etc. — that is, I will give thee strength which no power of thine enemies shall overcome (<sup><246B></sup>Jeremiah 6:27 15:20 <sup><250B></sup>Isaiah 50:7 54:17 <sup><221B></sup>Luke 21:15 <sup><406B></sup>Acts 6:10).

***walls*** — *plural*, to express the *abundant* strength to be given him. DE ROSSI’S S manuscripts read *singular*, “wall.”

***people of the land*** — the general masses, as distinguished from the princes and priests.

# CHAPTER 2

## 2411E JEREMIAH 2:1-37.

### EXPOSTULATION WITH THE JEWS, REMINDING THEM OF THEIR FORMER DEVOTEDNESS, AND GOD'S CONSEQUENT FAVOR, AND A DENUNCIATION OF GOD'S COMING JUDGMENTS FOR THEIR IDOLATRY.

Probably in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah (<sup>2400E</sup>Jeremiah 1:2; compare <sup>2416E</sup>Jeremiah 3:6, “also ... in ... days of Josiah”). The warning not to rely as they did on Egypt (<sup>2418E</sup>Jeremiah 2:18), was in accordance with Josiah’s policy, who took part with Assyria and Babylon against Egypt (<sup>2423E</sup>2 Kings 23:29). Jeremiah, doubtless, supported the reformation begun by Josiah, in the previous year (the twelfth of his reign), and fully carried out in the eighteenth.

2. *cry* — proclaim.

*Jerusalem* — the headquarters and center of their idolatry; therefore addressed first.

*thee* — rather, “I remember *in regard to thee*” [HENDERSON]; “for thee” [MAURER].

*kindness of thy youth* — not so much Israel’s kindness towards God, as *the kindness which Israel experienced from God* in their early history (compare <sup>2368E</sup>Ezekiel 16:8,22,60 23:3,8,19 <sup>2415E</sup>Hosea 2:15). For Israel from the first showed perversity rather than *kindness* towards God (compare <sup>2441E</sup>Exodus 14:11,12 15:24 32:1-7, etc.). The greater were God’s favors to them from the first, the fouler was their ingratitude in forsaking Him (<sup>2418E</sup>Jeremiah 2:3,5, etc.).

*espousals* — the intervals between Israel’s betrothal to God at the exodus from Egypt, and the formal execution of the marriage contract at Sinai. EWALD takes the “kindness” and “love” to be Israel’s towards God at first (<sup>2418E</sup>Exodus 19:8 24:3 35:20-29 36:5 <sup>2446E</sup>Joshua 24:16-17). But compare <sup>2426E</sup>Deuteronomy 32:16,17 <sup>2365E</sup>Ezekiel 16:5,6,15,22 (“days of thy youth”) implies that the *love* here meant was on God’s side, not Israel’s.

**thou wentest after me in ... wilderness** — the next act of God’s love, His leading them in the desert without needing any strange god, such as they since worshipped, to help Him (<sup>(1817)</sup>Deuteronomy 2:7 32:12). <sup>(3106)</sup>Jeremiah 2:6 shows it is *God’s* “leading” of them, not *their* following after God in the wilderness, which is implied.

**3. holiness unto the Lord** — that is, was *consecrated* to the service of *Jehovah* (<sup>(1295)</sup>Exodus 19:5,6). They thus answered to the motto on their high priest’s breastplate, “Holiness to the Lord” (<sup>(8106)</sup>Deuteronomy 7:6 14:2,21).

**first-fruits of his increase** — that is, of *Jehovah’s* produce. As the *first-fruits* of the whole *produce* of the land were devoted to God (<sup>(1239)</sup>Exodus 23:19 <sup>(4182)</sup>Numbers 18:12,13), so Israel was devoted to Him as the first-fruit and representative nation among all nations. So the spiritual Israel (<sup>(5018)</sup>James 1:18 <sup>(6404)</sup>Revelation 14:4).

**devour** — carrying on the image of *first-fruits* which were *eaten* before the Lord by the priests as the Lord’s representatives; all who *ate* (injured) *Jehovah’s* first-fruits (Israel), contracted guilt: for example, Amalek, the Amorites, etc., were extirpated for their guilt towards Israel.

**shall come** — rather, “came.”

**4. Jacob ... Israel** — the whole nation.

**families** — (See on <sup>(2115)</sup>Jeremiah 1:15). Hear God’s word not only collectively, but individually (<sup>(3125)</sup>Zechariah 12:12-14).

**5. iniquity** — *wrong* done to them (<sup>(2104)</sup>Isaiah 5:4 <sup>(3108)</sup>Micah 6:3; compare <sup>(6504)</sup>Deuteronomy 32:4).

**walked after vanity** — contrasted with “*walkest after me* in the wilderness” (<sup>(2112)</sup>Jeremiah 2:2): then *I* was their guide in the barren desert; now they take *idols* as their guides.

**vanity ... vain** — An idol is not only *vain* (impotent and empty), but *vanity* itself. Its worshippers acquire its character, becoming *vain* as it is (<sup>(612)</sup>Deuteronomy 7:26 <sup>(4958)</sup>Psalms 115:8). A people’s character never rises above that of its gods, which are its “better nature” [BACON] (<sup>(12715)</sup>2 Kings 17:15 Jon 2:8).

**6. Neither said they, Where**, etc. — The very words which *God* uses (<sup>(2310)</sup>Isaiah 63:9,11,13), when, as it were, reminding Himself of His former acts of love to Israel as a ground for interposing in their behalf again. When *they* would not say, Where is *Jehovah*, etc., *God Himself* at last said it for them (compare see on <sup>(2112)</sup>Jeremiah 2:2).

**deserts ... pits** — The desert between Mount Sinai and Palestine abounds in chasms and pits, in which beasts of burden often sink down to the knees. “Shadow of death” refers to the *darkness* of the caverns amidst the rocky precipices (<sup><4885></sup>Deuteronomy 8:15 32:10).

**7. plentiful** — literally, “a land of Carmel,” or “well-cultivated land”: a garden land, in contrast to the “land of deserts” (<sup><2116></sup>Jeremiah 2:6).

**defiled** — by idolatries (<sup><1020></sup>Judges 2:10-17 <sup><4588></sup>Psalms 78:58,59 106:38).

**you ... ye** — change to the second person from the third, “they” (<sup><2116></sup>Jeremiah 2:6), in order to bring home the guilt to the living generation.

**8.** The three leading classes, whose very office under the theocracy was to lead the people to God, disowned Him in the same language as the nation at large, “Where is the Lord?” (See <sup><2116></sup>Jeremiah 2:6).

**priests** — whose office it was to expound the law (<sup><3116></sup>Malachi 2:6,7).

**handle** — are occupied with the law as the subject of their profession.

**pastors** — civil, not religious: princes (<sup><2115></sup>Jeremiah 3:15), whose duty it was to tend their people.

**prophets** — who should have reclaimed the people from their apostasy, encouraged them in it by pretended oracles from Baal, the Phoenician false god.

**by Baal** — in his name and by his authority (compare <sup><2112></sup>Jeremiah 11:21).

**walked after things ... not profit** — answering to, “walked after *vanity*,” that is, idols (<sup><2115></sup>Jeremiah 2:5; compare <sup><2111></sup>Jeremiah 2:11 <sup><2118></sup>Habakkuk 2:18).

**9. yet plead** — namely, by inflicting still further judgments on you.

**children’s children** — Three manuscripts and JEROME omit “children’s”; they seem to have thought it unsuitable to read “children’s children,” when “children” had not preceded. But it is designedly so written, to intimate that the final judgment on the nation would be suspended *for* many generations [HORSLEY]. (Compare <sup><2115></sup>Ezekiel 20:35,36 <sup><2116></sup>Micah 6:2).

**10. pass over the isles** — rather, “cross over to the isles.”

**Chittim ... Kedar** — that is, the heathen nations, *west* and *east*. Go where you will, you cannot find an instance of any heathen nation forsaking their own for other gods. Israel alone does this. Yet the heathen gods are false

gods; whereas Israel, in forsaking Me for other gods, forsake their “glory” for unprofitable idols.

**Chittim** — Cyprus, colonized by Phoenicians, who built in it the city of Citium, the modern *Chitti*. Then the term came to be applied to all maritime coasts of the Mediterranean, especially Greece (<sup><400B></sup>Numbers 24:24 <sup><230E></sup>Isaiah 23:1 <sup><2713></sup>Daniel 11:30).

**Kedar** — descended from Ishmael; the Bedouins and Arabs, east of Palestine.

**11. glory** — Jehovah, the glory of Israel (<sup><196G></sup>Psalm 106:20 <sup><6123></sup>Romans 1:23). The Shekinah, or cloud resting on the sanctuary, was the symbol of “the glory of the Lord” (<sup><1081></sup>1 Kings 8:11; compare <sup><6104></sup>Romans 9:4). The golden calf was intended as an image of the true God (compare <sup><230E></sup>Exodus 32:4,5), yet it is called an “idol” (<sup><402E></sup>Acts 7:41). It (like Roman Catholic images) was a violation of the *second* commandment, as the heathen multiplying of gods is a violation of the *first*.

**not profit** — (<sup><240B></sup>Jeremiah 2:8).

**12. Impassioned personification** (<sup><2100></sup>Isaiah 1:2).

**horribly afraid** — rather, be horrified.”

**be ... very desolate** — rather, “be exceedingly aghast” at the monstrous spectacle. Literally, “to be dried up,” or “devastated,” (places devastated have such an unsightly look) [MAURER].

**13. two evils** — not merely *one* evil, like the idolaters who know no better; besides *simple* idolatry, My people *add* the sin of forsaking the true God whom they have known; the heathen, though having the sin of idolatry, are free from the further sin of changing the true God for idols (<sup><240E></sup>Jeremiah 2:11).

**forsaken me** — The *Hebrew* collocation brings out the only living God into more prominent contrast with idol nonentities. “*Me* they have forsaken, the Fountain,” etc. (<sup><2473></sup>Jeremiah 17:13 <sup><4930></sup>Psalm 36:9 <sup><6144></sup>John 4:14).

**broken cisterns** — tanks for rain water, common in the East, where wells are scarce. The tanks not only cannot give forth an ever-flowing fresh supply as fountains can, but cannot even retain the water poured into them; the stonework within being broken, the earth drinks up the collected water. So, in general, all earthly, compared with heavenly, means of satisfying man’s highest wants (<sup><238E></sup>Isaiah 55:1,2; compare <sup><6123></sup>Luke 12:33).

**14. *is he a homeborn slave*** — No. “Israel is Jehovah’s *son*, even His first-born” (<sup><1002></sup>Exodus 4:22). <sup><3126></sup>Jeremiah 2:16,18,36, and the absence of any *express* contrast of the two parts of the nation are against EICHORN’S view, that the prophet proposes to Judah, as yet spared, the case of Israel (the ten tribes) which had been carried away by Assyria as a warning of what they might expect if they should still put their trust in Egypt. “Were Israel’s ten tribes of meaner birth than Judah? Certainly not. If, then, the former fell before Assyria, what can Judah hope from Egypt against Assyria? ... Israel” is rather here the whole of the remnant still left in their own land, that is, Judah. “How comes it to pass that the nation which once was under God’s special protection (<sup><2413></sup>Jeremiah 2:3) is now left at the mercy of the foe as a worthless slave?” The prophet sees this event *as if* present, though it was still *future* to Judah (<sup><3129></sup>Jeremiah 2:19).

**15. *lions*** — the Babylonian princes (<sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 4:7; compare <sup><3184></sup>Amos 3:4). The disaster from the Babylonians in the fourth year of Jehoiakim’s reign, and again three years later when, relying on Egypt, he revolted from Nebuchadnezzar, is here referred to (<sup><2442></sup>Jeremiah 46:2 <sup><1231></sup>2 Kings 24:1,2).

**16. *Noph ... Tahapanes*** — *Memphis*, capital of Lower Egypt, on the west bank of the Nile, near the pyramids of Gizeh, opposite the site of modern Cairo. *Daphne*, on the Tanitic branch of the Nile, near Pelusium, on the frontier of Egypt towards Palestine. <sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 30:4 contracts it, *Hanes*. These two cities, one the capital, the other that with which the Jews came most in contact, stand for the whole of Egypt. *Tahapanes* takes its name from a goddess, Tphnet [CHAMPOLLION]. *Memphis* is from *Man-nofri*, “the abode of good men”; written in *Hebrew*, *Moph* (<sup><3106></sup>Hosea 9:6), or *Noph*. The reference is to the coming invasion of Judah by Pharaoh-necho of Egypt, on his return from the Euphrates, when he deposed Jehoahaz and levied a heavy tribute on the land (<sup><1233></sup>2 Kings 23:33-35). Josiah’s death in battle with the same Pharaoh is probably included (<sup><1232></sup>2 Kings 23:29,30).

***have broken*** — rather, *shall feed down* the crown, etc., that is, affect with the greatest ignominy, such as *baldness* was regarded in the East (<sup><2487></sup>Jeremiah 48:37 <sup><1123></sup>2 Kings 2:23). Instead of “also,” translate, “even” the Egyptians, in whom thou dost trust, shall miserably disappoint thy expectation [MAURER]. Jehoiakim was twice leagued with them (<sup><1234></sup>2 Kings 23:34,35): when he received the crown from them, and when he revolted from Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><1241></sup>2 Kings 24:1,2,7). The Chaldeans, having become masters of Asia, threatened Egypt. Judea, situated between the contending powers, was thus exposed to the inroads of the one or other of the hostile armies; and unfortunately, except in Josiah’s reign, took side with Egypt, contrary to God’s warnings.

**17.** Literally, “Has not thy forsaking the Lord ... procured this (calamity) to thee?” So the *Septuagint*: the Masoretic accents make “this” the *subject* of the verb, leaving the *object* to be understood. “Has not this procured (*it*, that is, the impending calamity) unto thee, that hast forsaken?” etc. (<sup>2118</sup>Jeremiah 4:18).

**led** — (<sup>620</sup>Deuteronomy 32:10).

**the way** — The article expresses *the right way, the way of the Lord*: namely, the moral training which they enjoyed in the Mosaic covenant.

**18. now** — used in a *reasoning* sense, not of *time*.

**the way of Egypt** — What hast thou to do *with the way*, that is, with going down *to Egypt*; or *what ... with going to Assyria*?

**drink ... waters** — that is, to seek *reinvigorating aid* from them; so <sup>2123</sup>Jeremiah 2:13,36; compare “waters,” meaning *numerous forces* (<sup>2187</sup>Isaiah 8:7).

**Sihor** — that is, the *black river*, in *Greek, Melas* (“black”), the Nile: so called from the black deposit or soil it leaves after the inundation (<sup>2218</sup>Isaiah 23:3). The *Septuagint* identifies it with Gihon, one of the rivers of Paradise.

**the river** — *Euphrates*, called by pre-eminence, *the river*; figurative for the Assyrian power. In 625 B.C., the seventeenth year of Josiah, and the fourth of Jeremiah’s office, the kingdom of Assyria fell before Babylon, therefore *Assyria* is here put for *Babylon* its successor: so in <sup>1229</sup>2 Kings 23:29 <sup>2187</sup>Lamentations 5:6. There was doubtless a league between Judea and Assyria (that is, Babylon), which caused Josiah to march against Pharaoh-necho of Egypt when that king went against Babylon: the evil consequences of this league are foretold in this verse and <sup>2126</sup>Jeremiah 2:36.

**19. correct ... reprove** — rather, in the severer sense, “chastise ... punish” [MAURER].

**backslidings** — “apostasies”; *plural*, to express the number and variety of their defections. The very confederacies they entered into were the occasion of their overthrow (<sup>2133</sup>Proverbs 1:31 <sup>2187</sup>Isaiah 3:9 <sup>2185</sup>Hosea 5:5).

**know ... see** — *imperative for futures: Thou shalt know and see* to thy cost.

**my fear** — rather, “the fear of Me.”

**20. I** — the *Hebrew* should be pointed as the second person *feminine*, a form common in Jeremiah: “*Thou* hast broken,” etc. So the *Septuagint*, and the sense requires it.

**thy yoke ... bands** — the yoke and bands which I laid *on thee*, My laws (<sup><2185></sup>Jeremiah 5:5).

**transgress** — so the *Keri*, and many manuscripts read. But the *Septuagint* and most authorities read, “I will not serve,” that is, obey. The sense of *English Version* is, “I broke thy yoke (in Egypt),” etc., “and (at that time) thou saidst, I will not transgress; whereas thou hast (since then) wandered (from Me)” (<sup><1298></sup>Exodus 19:8).

**hill ... green tree** — the scene of idolatries (<sup><1512></sup>Deuteronomy 12:2 <sup><2505></sup>Isaiah 57:5,7).

**wanderest** — rather, “thou hast *bowed down* thyself” (for the act of adultery: figurative of shameless idolatry, <sup><1245></sup>Exodus 34:15,16; compare <sup><1810></sup>Job 31:10).

21. The same image as in <sup><1522></sup>Deuteronomy 32:32 <sup><1808></sup>Psalms 80:8,9 <sup><2181></sup>Isaiah 5:1, etc.

**unto me** — with respect to Me.

22. **nitre** — not what is now so called, namely, saltpeter; but the *natron* of Egypt, a mineral alkali, an incrustation at the bottom of the lakes, after the summer heat has evaporated the water: used for washing (compare <sup><1810></sup>Job 9:30 <sup><1250></sup>Proverbs 25:20).

**soap** — potash, the carbonate of which is obtained impure from burning different plants, especially the *kali* of Egypt and Arabia. Mixed with oil it was used for washing.

**marked** — deeply ingrained, indelibly marked; the *Hebrew*, *catham*, being equivalent to *cathab*. Others translate, “is treasured up,” from the *Arabic*. MAURER from a *Syriac* root, “is polluted.”

23. (<sup><1812></sup>Proverbs 30:12).

**Baalim** — plural, to express manifold excellency: compare *Elohim*.

**see** — consider.

**the valley** — namely, of Hinnom, or Tophet, south and east of Jerusalem: rendered infamous by the human sacrifices to Moloch in it (compare <sup><1812></sup>Jeremiah 19:2,6,13,14 32:35; see on <sup><2183></sup>Isaiah 30:33).

**thou art** — omit. The substantive that follows in this verse (and also that in <sup><1212></sup>Jeremiah 2:24) is in apposition with the preceding “thou.”

**dromedary** — rather, a “young she-camel.”



**traversing** — literally, “enfolding”; making its ways *complicated* by wandering hither and thither, lusting after the male. Compare as to the Jews’ spiritual lust, <sup><2810></sup>Hosea 2:6,7.

**24.** (<sup><2446></sup>Jeremiah 14:6 <sup><3895></sup>Job 39:5). “A wild ass,” agreeing with “thou” (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 2:23).

**at her pleasure** — rather, “in her ardor,” namely, in pursuit of a male, sniffing the wind to ascertain where one is to be found [MAURER].

**occasion** — either from a *Hebrew* root, “to meet”; “her meeting (with the male for sexual intercourse), who can avert it?” Or better from an *Arabic* root: “her *heat* (sexual impulse), who can allay it?” [MAURER].

**all they** — whichever of the males desire her company [HORSLEY].

**will not weary themselves** — have no need to weary themselves in searching for her.

**her month** — in the *season of the year when her sexual impulse is strongest*, she puts herself in the way of the males, so that they have no difficulty in *finding* her.

**25. Withhold**, etc. — that is, abstain from incontinence; figuratively for idolatry [HOUBIGANT].

**unshod**, etc. — do not run so violently in pursuing lovers, as to *wear out thy shoes*: do not “thirst” so incontinently after sexual intercourse. HITZIG thinks the reference is to penances performed *barefoot* to idols, and the *thirst* occasioned by loud and continued invocations to them.

**no hope** — (<sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 18:12 <sup><2570></sup>Isaiah 57:10). “It is hopeless,” that is, I am *desperately* resolved to go on in my own course.

**strangers** — that is, laying aside the metaphor, “strange gods” (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 3:13 <sup><15216></sup>Deuteronomy 32:16).

**26. is ashamed** — is *put to shame*.

**thief** — (<sup><4801></sup>John 10:1).

**Israel** — that is, Judah (<sup><2428></sup>Jeremiah 2:28).

**27. Thou art my father** — (Contrast <sup><2484></sup>Jeremiah 3:4 <sup><2348></sup>Isaiah 64:8).

**in ... trouble they will say** — namely, to God (<sup><4784></sup>Psalms 78:34 <sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 26:16). Trouble often brings men to their senses (<sup><2156></sup>Luke 15:16-18).

**28. *But*** — God sends them to the gods for whom they forsook Him, to see if *they* can help them (<sup><1625></sup>Deuteronomy 32:37,38 <sup><1704></sup>Judges 10:14).

***according to the number of thy cities*** — Besides national deities, each city had its tutelary god (<sup><2413></sup>Jeremiah 11:13).

**29. *plead with me*** — that is, contend with Me for afflicting you (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 2:23,35).

**30.** (<sup><2458></sup>Jeremiah 5:3 6:29 <sup><2466></sup>Isaiah 1:5 9:13).

***your children*** — that is, your people, you.

***your ... sword ... devoured ... prophets*** — (<sup><4496></sup>2 Chronicles 36:16 <sup><4495></sup>Nehemiah 9:26 <sup><4239></sup>Matthew 23:29,31).

**31.** The *Hebrew* collocation is, “O, the generation, ye,” that is, “O ye who now live.” The generation needed only to be named, to call its degeneracy to view, so palpable was it.

***wilderness*** — in which all the necessities of life are wanting. On the contrary, Jehovah was a never-failing source of supply for all Israel’s wants in the wilderness, and afterwards in Canaan.

***darkness*** — literally, “darkness of Jehovah,” the strongest *Hebrew* term for “darkness; the densest darkness”; compare “land of the shadow of death” (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 2:6).

***We are lords*** — that is, We are our own masters. We will worship what gods we like (<sup><9124></sup>Psalms 12:4 82:6). But it is better to translate from a different *Hebrew* root: “We ramble at large,” without restraint pursuing our idolatrous lusts.

**32.** Oriental women greatly pride themselves on their ornaments (compare <sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 61:10).

***attire*** — girdles for the breast.

***forgotten me*** — (<sup><2425></sup>Jeremiah 13:25 <sup><2084></sup>Hosea 8:14).

**33. *Why trimmest*** — MAURER translates, “*How skilfully* thou dost prepare thy way,” etc. But see <sup><1289></sup>2 Kings 9:30. “Trimmed” best suits the image of one *decking* herself as a harlot.

***way*** — course of life.

***therefore*** — accordingly. Or else, “*nay*, thou hast even,” etc.

**also ... wicked ones** — *even* the wicked harlots, that is, (laying aside the metaphor) even the Gentiles who are wicked, thou teachest to be still more so [GROTIUS].

**34. Also** — not only art thou polluted with idolatry, but *also* with the guilt of shedding innocent blood [MAURER]. ROSENMULLER not so well translates, “even in thy skirts,” etc.; that is, there is no part of thee (*not even thy skirts*) that is not stained with innocent blood (<sup><2150></sup>Jeremiah 19:4 <sup><2216></sup>2 Kings 21:16 <sup><1946></sup>Psalm 106:38). See as to innocent blood shed, not as here in honor of idols, but of *prophets* for having reproved them (<sup><2129></sup>Jeremiah 2:30 <sup><2030></sup>Jeremiah 26:20-23).

**souls** — that is, persons.

**search** — I did not need to “search deep” to find proof of thy guilt; for it was “upon all these” thy skirts. Not in deep caverns didst thou perpetrate these atrocities, but openly in the vale of Hinnom and within the precincts of the temple.

**35.** (<sup><2123></sup>Jeremiah 2:23,29).

**36. gaddest** — runnest to and fro, now seeking help from Assyria (<sup><1486></sup>2 Chronicles 28:16-21), now from Egypt (<sup><2470></sup>Jeremiah 37:7,8 <sup><2308></sup>Isaiah 30:3).

**37. him** — Egypt.

**hands upon ... head** — expressive of mourning (<sup><1039></sup>2 Samuel 13:19).

**in them** — in those stays in which thou trustest.

# CHAPTER 3

## ~~2418E~~ JEREMIAH 3:1-25.

### GOD'S MERCY NOTWITHSTANDING JUDAH'S VILENESS.

Contrary to all precedent in the case of adultery, Jehovah offers a return to Judah, the spiritual adulteress (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 3:1-5). A new portion of the book, ending with the sixth chapter. Judah worse than Israel; yet both shall be restored in the last days (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 3:6-25).

**1. *They say*** — rather, as *Hebrew*, “saying,” in agreement with “the LORD”; (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 2:37 Of last chapter [MAURER]. Or, it is equivalent to, “Suppose this case.” Some copyist may have omitted, “The word of the Lord came to me,” *saying*).

***shall he return unto her*** — will he take her back? It was unlawful to do so (~~2418E~~ Deuteronomy 24:1-4).

***shall not*** — Should not the land be polluted if this were done?

***yet return*** — (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 3:22 ~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 4:1 ~~2418E~~ Zechariah 1:3; compare ~~2418E~~ Ezekiel 16:51,58,60). “Nevertheless,” etc. (see on ~~2418E~~ Isaiah 50:1).

**2. *high places*** — the scene of idolatries which were spiritual adulteries.

***In ... ways ... sat for them*** — watching for lovers like a prostitute (~~2418E~~ Genesis 38:14,21 ~~2418E~~ Proverbs 7:12 23:28 ~~2418E~~ Ezekiel 16:24,25), and like an Arab who lies in wait for travelers. The Arabs of the desert, east and south of Palestine, are still notorious as robbers.

**3. *no latter rain*** — essential to the crops in Palestine; withheld in judgment (~~2418E~~ Leviticus 26:19; compare ~~2418E~~ Joel 2:23).

***whore's forehead*** — (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 8:12 ~~2418E~~ Ezekiel 3:8).

**4. *from this time*** — not referring, as MICHAELIS thinks, to the reformation begun the year before, that is, the twelfth of Josiah; it means — now at once, now at last.

***me*** — contrasted with the “stock” whom they had heretofore called on as “father” (~~2418E~~ Jeremiah 2:27 ~~2418E~~ Luke 15:18).

**thou art** — rather, “thou wast.”

**guide of ... youth** — that is, husband (<sup><240D></sup>Jeremiah 2:2 <sup><240E></sup>Proverbs 2:17 <sup><240F></sup>Hosea 2:7,15). *Husband* and *father* are the two most endearing of ties.

**5. he** — “thou,” the second person, had preceded. The change to the third person implies a putting away of God to a *greater distance* from them; instead of repenting and forsaking their idols, they merely deprecate the continuance of their *punishment*. <sup><240G></sup>Jeremiah 3:12 and <sup><240H></sup>Psalm 103:9, answer their question in the event of their penitence.

**spoken and** — rather (God’s reply to them), “Thou hast spoken (thus), *and yet* (all the while) thou hast done evil,” etc.

**as thou couldst** — with all thy might; with incorrigible persistency [CALVIN].

**6.** From here to <sup><240I></sup>Jeremiah 6:30, is a new discourse, delivered in Josiah’s reign. It consists of two parts, the former extending to <sup><240J></sup>Jeremiah 4:3, in which he warns Judah from the example of Israel’s doom, and yet promises Israel final restoration; the latter a threat of Babylonian invasion; as Nabopolassar founded the Babylonian empire, 625 B.C., the seventeenth of Josiah, this prophecy is perhaps not earlier than that date (<sup><240K></sup>Jeremiah 4:5, etc.; <sup><240L></sup>Jeremiah 5:14, etc.; <sup><240M></sup>Jeremiah 6:1, etc.; <sup><240N></sup>Jeremiah 22:1-30); and probably not later than the second thorough reformation in the eighteenth year of the same reign.

**backsliding** — literally, “apostasy”; not merely *apostate*, but *apostasy itself*, the essence of it (<sup><240O></sup>Jeremiah 3:14,22).

**7. I said** — (<sup><240P></sup>2 Kings 17:13).

**sister** — (<sup><240Q></sup>Ezekiel 16:46 23:2,4).

**8.** I saw that, though (whereas) it was for this very reason (namely), because backsliding (apostate) Israel had committed adultery I had put her away (<sup><240R></sup>2 Kings 17:6,18), and given her a bill of divorce, yet Judah, etc. (<sup><240S></sup>Ezekiel 23:11, etc.).

**bill of divorce** — literally, “a writing of *cuttings* off.” The *plural* implies the completeness of the severance. The use of this metaphor here, as in the former discourse (<sup><240T></sup>Jeremiah 3:1), implies a close connection between the discourses. The epithets are characteristic; Israel “apostate” (as the *Hebrew* for “backsliding” is better rendered); Judah, not as yet utterly *apostate*, but *treacherous* or *faithless*.

**also** — herself also, like Israel.

**9. *it*** — Some take this verse of *Judah*, to whom the end of <sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 3:8 refers. But <sup><2480></sup>Jeremiah 3:10 puts *Judah* in contrast to *Israel* in this verse. “Yet for all this,” referring to the sad example of *Israel*; if <sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 3:9 referred to *Judah*, “she” would have been written in <sup><2480></sup>Jeremiah 3:10, not “*Judah*.” Translate, “It (the putting away of Israel) had come to pass through ... whoredom; and (that is, for) she (Israel) had defiled the land” etc. [MAURER]. *English Version*, however, *may* be explained to refer to *Israel*.

***lightness*** — “infamy.” [EWALD]. MAURER not so well takes it from the *Hebrew* root, “voice,” “fame.”

**10. *yet*** — notwithstanding the lesson given in Israel’s case of the fatal results of apostasy.

***not ... whole heart*** — The reformation in the eighteenth year of Josiah was not thorough on the part of the people, for at his death they relapsed into idolatry (<sup><4883></sup>2 Chronicles 34:33 <sup><2074></sup>Hosea 7:14).

**11. *justified herself*** — has been made to appear almost just (that is, comparatively innocent) by the surpassing guilt of *Judah*, who adds hypocrisy and treachery to her sin; and who had the example of *Israel* to warn her, but in vain (compare <sup><2658></sup>Ezekiel 16:51 23:11).

***more than*** — in comparison with.

**12. *Go*** — not actually; but turn and proclaim towards the north (*Media* and *Assyria*, where the ten tribes were located by Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser, <sup><2159></sup>2 Kings 15:29 17:6 18:9,11).

***Return ... backsliding*** — *Hebrew*, *Shubah*, *Meshubah*, a play on sounds. In order to excite *Judah* to godly jealousy (<sup><5114></sup>Romans 11:14), *Jehovah* addresses the exiled ten tribes of *Israel* with a loving invitation.

***cause ... anger to fall*** — literally, “I will not let fall My countenance” (compare <sup><1005></sup>Genesis 4:5,6 <sup><3293></sup>Job 29:3), that is, I will not *continue* to frown on you.

***keep*** — “anger” is to be supplied (see on <sup><2485></sup>Jeremiah 3:5).

**13. *Only acknowledge*** — (<sup><6501></sup>Deuteronomy 30:1,3 <sup><1885></sup>Proverbs 28:13).

***scattered thy ways*, etc.** — (<sup><2125></sup>Jeremiah 2:25). Not merely the calves at Beth-el, but the idols in every direction, were the objects of their worship (<sup><2365></sup>Ezekiel 16:15,24,25).

**14. *I am married*** — literally, “I am Lord,” that is, husband to you (so <sup><363></sup>Jeremiah 31:32; compare <sup><329></sup>Hosea 2:19,20 <sup><354></sup>Isaiah 54:5). GESENIUS, following the *Septuagint* version of <sup><363></sup>Jeremiah 31:32, and Paul’s quotation of it (<sup><389></sup>Hebrews 8:9), translates, “I have *rejected* you”; so the corresponding *Arabic*, and the idea of *lordship*, may pass into that of *looking down upon*, and so *rejecting*. But the *Septuagint* in *this* passage translates, “I will be Lord over you.” And the “for” has much more force in *English Version* than in that of GESENIUS. The *Hebrew* hardly admits the rendering *though* [HENGSTENBERG].

***take you one of a city*** — Though but *one or two* Israelites were in a (foreign) city, they shall not be forgotten; *all* shall be restored (<sup><309></sup>Amos 9:9). So, in the spiritual Israel, God gathers one convert here, another there, into His Church; not the least one is lost (<sup><384></sup>Matthew 18:14 <sup><315></sup>Romans 11:5; compare <sup><315></sup>Jeremiah 24:5-7).

***family*** — a clan or tribe.

**15. *pastors*** — not religious, but civil rulers, as Zerubbabel, Nehemiah (<sup><329></sup>Jeremiah 23:4 2:8).

**16. *they shall say no more*** — The Jews shall no longer glory in the possession of the ark; it shall not be missed, so great shall be the blessings of the new dispensation. The throne of the Lord, *present Himself*, shall eclipse and put out of mind the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat between the cherubim, God’s former throne. The ark, containing the two tables of the law, disappeared at the Babylonian captivity, and was not restored to the second temple, implying that the symbolical “glory” was to be superseded by a “greater glory” (<sup><319></sup>Haggai 2:9).

***neither ... visit it*** — rather, “neither shall *it be missed*” (so in <sup><324></sup>Jeremiah 23:4).

***done*** — rather, “neither shall it (the ark) *be made* (that is, be restored) any more” [MAURER].

**17. *Jerusalem*** — *the whole city*, not merely the temple. As it has been the center of the *Hebrew* theocracy, so it shall be the point of attraction to the whole earth (<sup><319></sup>Isaiah 2:2-4 <sup><320></sup>Zechariah 2:10,11 14:16-21).

***throne of ... Lord*** — The Shekinah, the symbol of God’s peculiar nearness to Israel (<sup><307></sup>Deuteronomy 4:7) shall be surpassed by the antitype, God’s own throne in Jerusalem (<sup><316></sup>Psalms 2:6,8 <sup><322></sup>Ezekiel 34:23,24 <sup><315></sup>Zechariah 2:5).

***imagination*** — rather, as *Margin*, “the obstinacy” or stubbornness.

**18. *Judah ... Israel ... together*** — Two distinct apostasies, that of Israel and that of Judah, were foretold (<sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 3:8,10). The two have never been united since the Babylonish captivity; therefore their joint restoration must be still future (<sup><2312></sup>Isaiah 11:12,13 <sup><2379></sup>Ezekiel 37:16-22 <sup><2011></sup>Hosea 1:11).

***north*** — (<sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 3:12).

***land ... given ... inheritance*** — (<sup><2095></sup>Amos 9:15).

**19.** The good land covenanted to Abraham is to be restored to his seed. But the question arises, How shall this be done?

***put ... among ... children*** — the *Greek* for *adoption* means, literally, “putting among the sons.”

***the children*** — that is, My children. “How shall I receive thee back into My family, after thou hast so long forsaken Me for idols?” The answer is, they would acknowledge Him as “Father,” and no longer turn away from Him. God assumes the language of one wondering how so desperate apostates could be restored to His family and its privileges (compare <sup><2578></sup>Ezekiel 37:3; CALVIN makes it, *How the race of Abraham can be propagated again*, being as it were dead); yet as His purpose has decreed it so, He shows how it shall be effected, namely, they shall receive from Him the spirit of adoption to cry, “My Father” (<sup><2012></sup>John 1:12 <sup><2006></sup>Galatians 4:6). The elect are “children” already in God’s purpose; this is the ground of the subsequent realization of this relationship (<sup><2005></sup>Ephesians 1:5 <sup><2023></sup>Hebrews 2:13).

***pleasant land*** — (<sup><2405></sup>Jeremiah 11:5 <sup><2306></sup>Ezekiel 20:6 <sup><2116></sup>Daniel 11:16, *Margin*).

***heritage of ... hosts*** — a heritage the most goodly of all nations [MAURER]; or a “heritage possessed by powerful hosts” (<sup><2088></sup>Deuteronomy 4:38 <sup><2009></sup>Amos 2:9). The rendering “splendors,” instead of “hosts,” is opposed by the fact that the *Hebrew* for “splendor” is not found in the *plural*.

**20. *Surely*** — rather, “But.”

***husband*** — literally, “friend.”

**21.** In harmony with the preceding promises of God, the penitential confessions of Israel are heard.

***high places*** — The scene of their idolatries is the scene of their confessions. Compare <sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 3:23, in which they cast aside their trust in these idolatrous high places. The publicity of their penitence is also implied (compare <sup><2479></sup>Jeremiah 7:29 48:38).



22. Jehovah's renewed invitation (<sup><4818></sup>Jeremiah 3:12,14) and their immediate response.

*heal* — forgive (<sup><4818></sup>2 Chronicles 30:18,20 <sup><2840></sup>Hosea 14:4).

*unto thee* — rather, “in obedience to thee”; literally, “for thee” [ROSENMULLER].

23. *multitude of mountains* — that is, the multitude of *gods* worshipped on them (compare <sup><4801></sup>Psalm 121:1,2, *Margin*).

24. *shame* — that is, the *idols*, whose worship only covers us with *shame* (<sup><2811></sup>Jeremiah 11:13 <sup><2890></sup>Hosea 9:10). So far from bringing us “salvation,” they have cost us our cattle and even our children, whom we have sacrificed to them.

25. (<sup><4801></sup>Ezra 9:7).

# CHAPTER 4

## JEREMIAH 4:1-31.

CONTINUATION OF ADDRESS TO THE TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL. (<sup>2001</sup>JEREMIAH 4:1,2). THE PROPHET TURNS AGAIN TO JUDAH, TO WHOM HE HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SENT (<sup>2002</sup>JEREMIAH 4:3-31).

1. **return ... return** — play on words. “If thou wouldest *return to thy land* (thou must first), return (by conversion and repentance) to *Me*.”

**not remove** — no longer be an unsettled *wanderer* in a strange land. So Cain (<sup>0002</sup>Genesis 4:12,14).

2. **And thou** — rather, “And *if* (carried on from <sup>2001</sup>Jeremiah 4:1) thou shalt swear, ‘Jehovah liveth,’ in truth, etc.”, that is, if thou shalt *worship* Him (for we *swear* by the God whom we worship; compare <sup>0003</sup>Deuteronomy 6:13 10:20 <sup>2003</sup>Isaiah 19:18 <sup>3004</sup>Amos 8:14) in sincerity, etc.

**and the nations** — Rather, this is apodosis to the “if”; *then* shall the nations bless themselves in (by) Him” (<sup>2006</sup>Isaiah 65:16). The conversion of the nations will be the consequence of Israel’s conversion (<sup>4902</sup>Psalms 102:13,15 <sup>6102</sup>Romans 11:12,15).

3. Transition to Judah. Supply mentally. All which (the foregoing declaration as to Israel) applies to Judah.

**and Jerusalem** — that is, and *especially* the men of Jerusalem, as being the most prominent in Judea.

**Break ... fallow ground** — that is, Repent of your idolatry, and so be prepared to serve the Lord in truth (<sup>2002</sup>Hosea 10:12 <sup>4002</sup>Matthew 13:7). The unhumbled heart is like ground which may be improved, being let out to us for that purpose, but which is as yet fallow, overgrown with weeds, its natural product.

4. Remove your natural corruption of heart (<sup>0006</sup>Deuteronomy 10:16 30:6 <sup>6102</sup>Romans 2:29 <sup>5001</sup>Colossians 2:11).

5. **cry, gather together** — rather, “cry fully” that is, loudly. The Jews are warned to take measures against the impending Chaldean invasion (compare <sup><2184></sup>Jeremiah 8:14).

6. **Zion** — The standard *toward* Zion intimated that the people of the surrounding country were to fly *to* it, as being the strongest of their fortresses.

7. **lion** — Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans (<sup><2185></sup>Jeremiah 2:15 5:6 <sup><2184></sup>Daniel 7:14).

**his thicket** — lair; Babylon.

**destroyer of the Gentiles** — rather, “the nations” (<sup><2189></sup>Jeremiah 25:9).

8. Nothing is left to the Jews but to bewail their desperate condition.

**anger ... not turned back** — (<sup><2192></sup>Isaiah 9:12,17,21).

9. **heart** — The *wisdom* of the most leading men will be utterly at a loss to devise means of relief.

10. **thou hast ... deceived** — God, having even the false prophets in His hands, is here said to do that which for inscrutable purposes He *permits* them to do (<sup><2192></sup>Exodus 9:12 <sup><2121></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:11; compare <sup><2185></sup>Jeremiah 8:15; which passage shows that the dupes of error were *self-prepared* for it, and that God’s predestination did not destroy their moral freedom as voluntary agents). The false prophets foretold “peace,” and the Jews believed them; God overruled this to His purposes (<sup><2152></sup>Jeremiah 5:12 14:13 <sup><2149></sup>Ezekiel 14:9).

**soul** — rather, “reacheth to the *life*.”

11. **dry wind** — the *simoom*, terrific and destructive, blowing from the southeast across the sandy deserts east of Palestine. Image of the invading Babylonian army (<sup><2135></sup>Hosea 13:15). Babylon in its turn shall be visited by a similar “destroying wind” (<sup><2151></sup>Jeremiah 51:1).

**of ... high places** — that is, that sweeps over the high places.

**daughter** — that is, the *children* of my people.

**not to fan** — a very different wind from those ordinary winds employed for fanning the grain in the open air.

12. **full ... from those places** — rather, “a wind *fuller* (that is, more impetuous) *than* those winds” (which fan the corn) (<sup><2111></sup>Jeremiah 4:11) [ROSENMULLER].

**unto me** — “for Me,” as My instrument for executing My purpose.

**sentence** — *judgments* against them (<sup>2416</sup>Jeremiah 1:16).

**13. clouds** — continuing the metaphor in <sup>2415</sup>Jeremiah 4:11:12. Clouds of sand and dust accompany the simoom, and after rapid gyrations ascend like a pillar.

**eagles** — (<sup>4538</sup>Deuteronomy 28:49 <sup>3008</sup>Habakkuk 1:8).

**Woe unto us** — The people are graphically presented before us, without it being formally so stated, bursting out in these exclamations.

**14.** Only one means of deliverance is left to the Jews — a thorough repentance.

**vain thoughts** — namely, projects for deliverance, such as enlisting the Egyptians on their side. GESENIUS translates, “How long wilt thou harbor vain thoughts?”

**15. For ... from Daniel** — The connection is: There is danger in delay; *for* the voice of a messenger announces the approach of the Chaldean enemy from Dan, the northern frontier of Palestine (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 8:16; compare <sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 4:6 <sup>2414</sup>Jeremiah 1:14).

**Mount Ephraim** — which borders closely on Judah; so that the foe is coming nearer and nearer. Daniel and Beth-el in *Ephraim* were the two places where Jeroboam set up the idolatrous calves (<sup>1129</sup>1 Kings 12:29); just retribution.

**16.** The neighboring foreign “nations” are summoned to witness Jehovah’s judgments on His rebel people (<sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 6:18,19).

**watchers** — that is, besiegers (compare <sup>4016</sup>2 Samuel 11:16); observed or watched, that is, besieged.

**their voice** — the war shout.

**17. keepers of a field** — metaphor from those who watch a field, to frighten away the wild beasts.

**18.** (<sup>2417</sup>Jeremiah 2:17,19 <sup>4977</sup>Psalms 107:17).

**this is thy wickedness** — that is, the fruit of thy wickedness.

**19.** The prophet suddenly assumes the language of the Jewish state personified, lamenting its affliction (<sup>2409</sup>Jeremiah 10:19,20 9:1,10 <sup>2456</sup>Isaiah 15:5; compare <sup>2941</sup>Luke 19:41).

**at my very heart** — *Hebrew*, “at the walls of my heart”; the muscles round the heart. There is a climax, the “bowels,” the *pericardium*, the “heart” itself.

**maketh ... noise** — moaneth [HENDERSON].

**alarm** — the battle shout.

**20. Destruction ... cried** — Breach upon breach is announced (<sup>4907</sup>Psalm 42:7 <sup>4372</sup>Ezekiel 7:26). The war “trumpet” ... the battle shout ... the “destructions” ... the havoc throughout “the whole land” ... the spoiling of the shepherds “tents” (<sup>4810</sup>Jeremiah 10:20; or, “tents” means *cities*, which should be overthrown as easily as *tents* [CALVIN]), form a gradation.

**21.** Judah in perplexity asks, How long is this state of things to continue?

**22.** Jehovah’s reply; they cannot be otherwise than miserable, since they persevere in sin. The repetition of clauses gives greater force to the sentiment.

**wise ... evil ... to do good ... no knowledge** — reversing the rule (<sup>4569</sup>Romans 16:19) “wise unto ... good, simple concerning evil.”

**23.** Graphic picture of the utter desolation about to visit Palestine. “I beheld, and lo!” four times solemnly repeated, heightens the awful effect of the scene (compare <sup>2349</sup>Isaiah 24:19 34:11).

**without form and void** — reduced to the primeval chaos (<sup>4002</sup>Genesis 1:2).

**24. mountains** — (<sup>2155</sup>Isaiah 5:25).

**moved lightly** — shook vehemently.

**25. no man ... birds** — No vestige of the human, or of the feathered creation, is to be seen (<sup>4780</sup>Ezekiel 38:20 <sup>4305</sup>Zephaniah 1:3).

**26. fruitful place** — *Hebrew*, *Carmel*.

**a wilderness** — *Hebrew*, “the wilderness,” in contrast to “the fruitful place”; the great desert, where *Carmel* was, there is now *the desert* of Arabia [MAURER].

**cities** — in contrast to *the fruitful place* or field.

**27. full end** — utter destruction: I will leave some hope of restoration (<sup>4180</sup>Jeremiah 5:10,18 30:11 46:28; compare <sup>4364</sup>Leviticus 26:44).

**28. For this** — on account of the desolations just described (<sup>2150</sup>Isaiah 5:30 <sup>4045</sup>Hosea 4:3).

**not repent** — (<sup><0239</sup>Numbers 23:19).

**29. whole city** — Jerusalem: to it the inhabitants of the country had fled for refuge; but when it, too, is likely to fall, they flee out of it to hide in the “thickets.” HENDERSON translates, “every city.”

**noise** — The mere noise of the hostile horsemen shall put you to flight.

**30. when thou art spoiled** — rather, “thou, O *destroyed* one” [MAURER].

**rentest ... face with painting** — Oriental women paint their eyes with stibium, or antimony, to make them look full and sparkling, the black margin causing the white of the eyes to appear the brighter by contrast (<sup><1180</sup>2 Kings 9:30). He uses the term “distendest” in derision of their effort to make their eyes look large [MAURER]; or else, “rentest,” that is, dost lacerate by puncturing the eyelid in order to make the antimony adhere [ROSENMULLER]. So the Jews use every artifice to secure the aid of Egypt against Babylon.

**face** — rather, thy eyes (<sup><2340</sup>Ezekiel 23:40).

**31. anguish** — namely, occasioned by the attack of the enemy.

**daughter of Zion** — There is peculiar beauty in suppressing the name of the person in trouble, until that trouble had been fully described [HENDERSON].

**bewaileth herself** — rather, “draweth her breath short” [HORSLEY]; “panteth.”

**spreadeth ... hands** — (<sup><2017</sup>Lamentations 1:17).

# CHAPTER 5

## JEREMIAH 5:1-31.

### THE CAUSE OF THE JUDGMENTS TO BE INFLICTED IS THE UNIVERSAL CORRUPTION OF THE PEOPLE.

1. **a man** — As the pious Josiah, Baruch, and Zephaniah lived in Jerusalem at that time, Jeremiah must here mean the mass of the people, the king, his counsellors, the false prophets, and the priests, as distinguished from the faithful few, whom God had openly separated from the reprobate people; among the latter not even *one* just person was to be found (<sup>2396</sup>Isaiah 9:16) [CALVIN]; the godly, moreover, were forbidden to intercede for them (<sup>2476</sup>Jeremiah 7:16; compare <sup>4183</sup>Genesis 18:23, etc. <sup>4911</sup>Psalms 12:1 <sup>4223</sup>Ezekiel 22:30).

**see ... know** — look ... ascertain.

**judgment** — justice, righteousness.

**pardon it** — rather, *her*.

2. (<sup>3016</sup>Titus 1:16).

**swear falsely** — not a judicial oath; but their profession of the worship of Jehovah is insincere (<sup>2467</sup>Jeremiah 5:7 <sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 4:2). The reformation under Josiah was merely superficial in the case of the majority.

3. **eyes upon the truth** — (<sup>6534</sup>Deuteronomy 32:4 <sup>4462</sup>2 Chronicles 16:9). “Truth” is in contrast with “swear falsely” (<sup>2467</sup>Jeremiah 5:2). The false-professing Jews could expect nothing but judgments from the God of truth.

**stricken ... not grieved** — (<sup>2423</sup>Jeremiah 2:30 <sup>2406</sup>Isaiah 1:5 9:13).

**refused ... correction** — (<sup>2478</sup>Jeremiah 7:28 <sup>3492</sup>Zephaniah 3:2).

4. **poor** — rather, “*the poor*.” He supposes for the moment that this utter depravity is confined to the uninstructed poor, and that he would find a different state of things in the higher ranks: but there he finds unbridled profligacy.

5. **they have known** — rather, “they must know.” The prophet *supposes it as probable*, considering their position.

**but these** — I found the very reverse to be the case.

**burst ... bonds** — set God's law at defiance (<sup><311B></sup>Psalm 2:3).

**6. lion ... wolf ... leopard** — the strongest, the most ravenous, and the swiftest, respectively, of beasts: illustrating the formidable character of the Babylonians.

**of the evenings** — Others not so well translate, *of the deserts*. The plural means that it goes forth *every evening* to seek its prey (<sup><344D></sup>Psalm 104:20 <sup><300S></sup>Habakkuk 1:8 <sup><318F></sup>Zephaniah 3:3).

**leopard ... watch ... cities** — (<sup><283U></sup>Hosea 13:7). It shall lie in wait about their cities.

**7.** It would not be consistent with God's holiness to let such wickedness pass unpunished.

**sworn by** — (<sup><318E></sup>Jeremiah 5:2 <sup><300E></sup>Jeremiah 4:2); that is, worshipped.

**no gods** — (<sup><352I></sup>Deuteronomy 32:21).

**fed ... to the full** — so the *Keri* (*Hebrew Margin*) reads, God's bountifulness is contrasted with their apostasy (<sup><352S></sup>Deuteronomy 32:15). Prosperity, the gift of God, designed to lead men to Him, often produces the opposite effect. The *Hebrew Chetib* (text), reads: "I bound them (to Me) by oath," namely, in the *marriage covenant*, sealed at Sinai between God and Israel; in contrast to which stands their "adultery"; the antithesis favors this.

**adultery ... harlots' houses** — spiritually: idolatry in temples of idols; but literal prostitution is also included, being frequently part of idol-worship: for example, in the worship of the Babylonian *Mylitta*.

**8. in the morning** — (<sup><235I></sup>Isaiah 5:11). "Rising early in the morning" is a phrase for unceasing eagerness in any pursuit; such was the Jews' avidity after idol-worship. MAURER translates from a different *Hebrew* root, "continually wander to and fro," inflamed with lust (<sup><342S></sup>Jeremiah 2:23). But *English Version* is simpler (compare <sup><343V></sup>Jeremiah 13:27 <sup><352I></sup>Ezekiel 22:11).

**9.** (<sup><245S></sup>Jeremiah 5:29 <sup><349B></sup>Jeremiah 9:9 44:22).

**10.** Abrupt apostrophe to the Babylonians, to take Jerusalem, but *not to destroy the nation utterly* (see on <sup><340Z></sup>Jeremiah 4:27).

**battlements** — rather, *tendrils* [MAURER]: the state being compared to a *vine* (<sup><342I></sup>Jeremiah 12:10), the stem of which was to be spared, while the tendrils (the chief men) were to be removed.



11. (<sup>248D</sup>Jeremiah 3:20).

12. *belied* — denied.

*It is not he* — rather, “(Jehovah) is not HE,” that is, the true and only God (<sup>244D</sup>Jeremiah 14:22 <sup>652D</sup>Deuteronomy 32:39 <sup>236D</sup>Isaiah 43:10,13). By their idolatry they virtually denied Him. Or, referring to what follows, and to <sup>248D</sup>Jeremiah 5:9, “(Jehovah) is not,” namely, about to be the punisher of our sins (<sup>244D</sup>Jeremiah 14:13 <sup>238D</sup>Isaiah 28:15).

13. Continuation of the unbelieving language of the Jews.

*the prophets* — who prophesy punishment coming on us.

*the word* — the Holy Spirit, who speaks through true prophets, is not in them [MAURER]. Or else, “There is no word (divine communication) in them” (<sup>300D</sup>Hosea 1:2) [ROSENMULLER].

*thus*, etc. — Their ill-omened prophecies shall fall on themselves.

14. *ye ... thy ... this people* — He turns away from addressing the people to the prophet; implying that He puts them to a distance from Him, and only communicates with them through His prophet (<sup>248D</sup>Jeremiah 5:19).

*fire ... wood* — Thy denunciations of judgments shall be fulfilled and shall consume them as fire does wood. In <sup>242D</sup>Jeremiah 23:29 it is the *penetrating energy* of fire which is the point of comparison.

15. (<sup>241D</sup>Jeremiah 1:15 6:22). Alluding to <sup>658D</sup>Deuteronomy 28:49, etc.

*Israel* — that is, Judah.

*mighty* — from an *Arabic* root, “enduring.” The fourfold repetition of “nation” heightens the force.

*ancient* — The Chaldeans came originally from the Carduchian and Armenian mountains north of Mesopotamia, whence they immigrated into Babylonia; like all mountaineers, they were brave and hardy (see on <sup>233D</sup>Isaiah 23:13).

*language ... knowest not* — <sup>236D</sup>Isaiah 36:11 shows that *Aramaic* was not understood by the “multitude,” but only by the educated classes [MAURER]. HENDERSON refers it to the *original language* of the Babylonians, which, he thinks, they brought with them from their native hills, akin to the *Persic*, not to the *Aramaic*, or any other Semitic tongue, the parent of the modern *Kurd*.

**16. *open sepulcher*** — (Compare <sup><4989></sup>Psalm 5:9). Their quiver is all-devouring, as the grave opened to receive the dead: as many as are the arrows, so many are the deaths.

**17.** (<sup><4936></sup>Leviticus 26:16).

**18.** *Not even* in those days of judgments, will God utterly exterminate His people.

***I will not make a full end with you*** — (<sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 5:10 <sup><2427></sup>Jeremiah 4:27).

**19.** Retribution in kind. As ye have forsaken Me (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 2:13), so shall ye be forsaken by Me. As ye have served strange (foreign) gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers (foreigners) in a land not yours. Compare the similar retribution in <sup><4587></sup>Deuteronomy 28:47,48.

**21. *eyes ... ears, and*** — Translate, “and yet” (compare <sup><4630></sup>Deuteronomy 29:4 <sup><2469></sup>Isaiah 6:9). Having powers of perception, they did not use them: still they were responsible for the exercise of them.

**22. *sand*** — Though made up of particles easily shifting about, I render it sufficient to curb the violence of the sea. Such is your monstrous perversity, that the raging, senseless sea sooner obeys Me, than ye do who profess to be intelligent [CALVIN], (<sup><4830></sup>Job 26:10 38:10 11 <sup><2029></sup>Proverbs 8:29 <sup><4650></sup>Revelation 15:4).

**23.** (<sup><2458></sup>Jeremiah 6:28).

**24. *rain ... former ... latter*** — The “former” falls from the middle of October to the beginning of December. The “latter,” or spring rain in Palestine, falls before harvest in March and April, and is essential for ripening the crops (<sup><4614></sup>Deuteronomy 11:14 <sup><2023></sup>Joel 2:23).

***weeks of ... harvest*** — the seven weeks between passover and pentecost, beginning on the sixteenth of Nisan (<sup><4649></sup>Deuteronomy 16:9). By God’s special providence no rain fell in Palestine during the harvest weeks, so that harvest work went on without interruption (see <sup><4022></sup>Genesis 8:22).

**25.** National guilt had caused the suspension of these national mercies mentioned in <sup><2454></sup>Jeremiah 5:24 (compare <sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 3:3).

**26.** (<sup><2011></sup>Proverbs 1:11,17,18 <sup><3015></sup>Habakkuk 1:15).

***as he that setteth snares*** — rather, “as fowlers crouch” [MAURER].

***trap*** — literally, “destruction”: the instrument of destruction.

**catch men** — not as Peter, to save (<sup><4810></sup>Luke 5:10), but to destroy men.

**27. full of deceit** — full of treasures got by deceit.

**rich** — (<sup><4752></sup>Psalm 73:12,18-20).

**28. shine** — the effect of fatness on the skin (<sup><4605></sup>Deuteronomy 32:15). They live a life of self-indulgence.

**overpass ... the wicked** — exceed even the Gentiles in wickedness (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 2:33 <sup><3816></sup>Ezekiel 5:6,7).

**judge not ... fatherless** — (<sup><2123></sup>Isaiah 1:23).

**yet ... prosper** — (<sup><2411></sup>Jeremiah 12:1).

**29.** (<sup><2489></sup>Jeremiah 5:9 <sup><3485></sup>Malachi 3:5).

**30.** (<sup><2244></sup>Jeremiah 23:14 <sup><2860></sup>Hosea 6:10).

**31. bear rule by their means** — literally, “according to their hands,” that is, under their guidance (<sup><4328></sup>1 Chronicles 25:3). As a sample of the priests lending themselves to the deceits of the false prophets, to gain influence over the people, see <sup><2924></sup>Jeremiah 29:24-32.

**love to have it so** — (<sup><3311></sup>Micah 2:11).

**end thereof** — the fatal issue of this sinful course when divine judgments shall come.

# CHAPTER 6

## ~~2101~~ JEREMIAH 6:1-30.

### ZION'S FOES PREPARE WAR AGAINST HER: HER SINS ARE THE CAUSE.

1. **Benjamin** — Jerusalem was situated in the tribe of Benjamin, which was here separated from that of Judah by the valley of Hinnom. Though it was inhabited partly by Benjamites, partly by men of Judah, he addresses the former as being his own countrymen.

**blow ... trumpet ... Tekoa** — *Tikehu*, *Tekoa* form a play on sounds. The birthplace of Amos.

**Beth-haccerem** — meaning in *Hebrew*, “vineyard-house.” It and Tekoa were a few miles south of Jerusalem. As the enemy came from the north, the inhabitants of the surrounding country would naturally flee southwards. The fire-signal on the hills gave warning of danger approaching.

2. **likened** — rather, “I lay waste.” Literally, “O comely and delicate one, I lay waste the daughter of Zion,” that is, “thee.” So ~~3819~~ Zechariah 3:9, “before *Joshua*,” that is, “before *thee*” [MAURER].

3. **shepherds** — hostile leaders with their armies (~~2415~~ Jeremiah 1:15 4:17 49:20 50:45).

**feed** — They shall consume each one all that is near him; literally, “his hand,” that is, the *place* which he occupies (~~4017~~ Numbers 2:17; see on ~~2305~~ Isaiah 56:5).

4, 5. The invading soldiers encourage one another to the attack on Jerusalem.

**Prepare** — literally, “Sanctify” war, that is, Proclaim it formally with solemn rites; the invasion was solemnly ordered by God (compare ~~2318~~ Isaiah 13:3).

**at noon** — the hottest part of the day when attacks were rarely made (~~2458~~ Jeremiah 15:8 20:16). Even at this time they wished to attack, such is their eagerness.

**Woe unto us** — The words of the invaders, mourning the approach of *night* which would suspend their hostile operations; still, even in spite of the darkness, at night they renew the attack (<sup><2165></sup>Jeremiah 6:5).

**6. cast** — *Hebrew*, “pour out”; referring to the emptying of the baskets of earth to make the *mound*, formed of “trees” and earthwork, to overtop the city walls. The “trees” were also used to make warlike engines.

**this** — pointing the invaders to Jerusalem.

**visited** — that is, punished.

**wholly oppression** — or join “wholly” with “visited,” that is, she is altogether (in her whole extent) to be punished [MAURER].

**7. fountain** — rather, a *well* dug, from which water springs; distinct from a natural spring or fountain.

**casteth out** — causeth to flow; literally, “causeth to dig,” the cause being put for the effect (<sup><2216></sup>2 Kings 21:16,24 <sup><2571></sup>Isaiah 57:20).

**me** — Jehovah.

**8. Tender appeal in the midst of threats.**

**depart** — *Hebrew*, “be torn away”; Jehovah’s affection making Him unwilling to depart; His attachment to Jerusalem was such that an effort was needed to tear Himself from it (<sup><2338></sup>Ezekiel 23:18; <sup><3992></sup>Hosea 9:12 11:8).

**9. The Jews are the grapes, their enemies the unsparing gleaners.**

**turn back ... hand** — again and again bring freshly gathered handfuls to the baskets; referring to the repeated carrying away of captives to Babylon (<sup><2628></sup>Jeremiah 52:28-30 <sup><2244></sup>2 Kings 24:14 25:11).

**10. ear is uncircumcised** — closed against the precepts of God by the foreskin of carnality (<sup><1334></sup>Leviticus 26:41 <sup><2447></sup>Ezekiel 44:7 <sup><4175></sup>Acts 7:51).

**word ... reproach** — (<sup><2018></sup>Jeremiah 20:8).

**11. fury of ... Lord** — His denunciations against Judah communicated to the prophet.

**weary with holding in** — (<sup><2019></sup>Jeremiah 20:9).

**I will pour** — or else imperative: the command of God (see <sup><2162></sup>Jeremiah 6:12), “Pour it out” [MAURER].

**aged ... full of days** — The former means *one becoming old*; the latter a *decrepit old man* [MAURER] (<sup><38E3></sup>Job 5:26 <sup><2351></sup>Isaiah 65:20).

12. The very punishments threatened by Moses in the event of disobedience to God (<sup><6331></sup>Deuteronomy 28:30).

**turned** — transferred.

13. (<sup><2481></sup>Jeremiah 8:10 <sup><2351></sup>Isaiah 56:11 <sup><3311></sup>Micah 3:11).

14. **hurt** — the spiritual *wound*.

**slightly** — as if it were but a *slight* wound; or, *in a slight manner*, pronouncing all sound where there is no soundness.

**saying** — namely, the prophets and priests (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 6:13). Whereas they ought to warn the people of impending judgments and the need of repentance, they say there is nothing to fear.

**peace** — including soundness. All is *sound* in the nation's moral state, so all will be *peace* as to its political state (<sup><2481></sup>Jeremiah 4:10 8:11 14:13 23:17 <sup><3335></sup>Ezekiel 13:5,10 22:28).

15. ROSENMULLER translates, "They *ought to have been* ashamed, because ... but," etc.; the *Hebrew* verb often expressing, not the action, but the *duty* to perform it (<sup><4111></sup>Genesis 20:9 <sup><3311></sup>Malachi 2:7). MAURER translates, "They shall be put to shame, for they commit abomination; nay (the prophet correcting himself), there is no shame in them" (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 3:3 8:12 <sup><3311></sup>Ezekiel 3:7 <sup><3311></sup>Zephaniah 3:5).

**them that fall** — They shall fall with the rest of their people who are doomed to fall, that is, I will now cease from words; I will execute vengeance [CALVIN].

16. Image from travelers who have lost their road, stopping and inquiring which is the right way on which they once had been, but from which they have wandered.

**old paths** — Idolatry and apostasy are the modern way; the worship of God the *old* way. Evil is not coeval with good, but a *modern degeneracy* from good. The forsaking of God is not, in a true sense, a "way cast up" at all (<sup><2485></sup>Jeremiah 18:15 <sup><1311></sup>Psalms 139:24 <sup><3004></sup>Malachi 4:4).

**rest** — (<sup><2322></sup>Isaiah 28:12 <sup><4112></sup>Matthew 11:29).

17. **watchmen** — prophets, whose duty it was to announce impending calamities, so as to lead the people to repentance (<sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 21:11 58:1 <sup><3311></sup>Ezekiel 3:17 <sup><3311></sup>Habakkuk 2:1).

**18. congregation** — parallel to “nations”; it therefore means *the gathered peoples* who are invited to be witnesses as to how great is the perversity of the Israelites (<sup>2166</sup>Jeremiah 6:16,17), and that they deserve the severe punishment about to be inflicted on them (<sup>2169</sup>Jeremiah 6:19).

**what is among them** — what *deeds* are committed by the *Israelites* (<sup>2166</sup>Jeremiah 6:16,17) [MAURER]. Or, “what *punishments* are about to be inflicted on them” [CALVIN].

**19.** (<sup>2102</sup>Isaiah 1:2).

**fruit of ... thoughts** — (<sup>2103</sup>Proverbs 1:31).

**nor to my law, but rejected it** — literally, “and (as to) My law they have rejected it.” The same construction occurs in <sup>10224</sup>Genesis 22:24. Literally, “To what purpose is this to Me, that incense cometh to Me?”

**incense ... cane** — (<sup>2363</sup>Isaiah 43:24 60:6). No external services are accepted by God without obedience of the heart and life (<sup>2472</sup>Jeremiah 7:21 <sup>4807</sup>Psalms 50:7-9 <sup>2111</sup>Isaiah 1:11 <sup>3169</sup>Micah 6:6, etc.).

**sweet ... sweet** — antithesis. Your *sweet* cane is not *sweet* to Me. The calamus.

**21. stumbling-blocks** — instruments of the Jews’ ruin (compare <sup>1244</sup>Matthew 21:44 <sup>2184</sup>Isaiah 8:14 <sup>1018</sup>1 Peter 2:8). God Himself (“I”) *lays* them before the reprobate (<sup>3622</sup>Psalms 69:22 <sup>8128</sup>Romans 1:28 11:9).

**fathers ... sons ... neighbor ... friend** — indiscriminate ruin.

**22. north ... sides of the earth** — The ancients were little acquainted with the *north*; therefore it is called *the remotest regions* (as the *Hebrew* for “sides” ought to be translated, see on <sup>2143</sup>Isaiah 14:13) *of the earth*. The Chaldees are meant (<sup>2115</sup>Jeremiah 1:15 5:15). It is striking that the very same calamities which the Chaldeans had inflicted on Zion are threatened as the retribution to be dealt in turn to themselves by Jehovah (<sup>2641</sup>Jeremiah 50:41-43).

**23. like the sea** — (<sup>2151</sup>Isaiah 5:30).

**as men for war** — not that they were *like* warriors, for they *were* warriors; but “arrayed *most perfectly as warriors*” [MAURER].

**24. fame thereof** — the report of them.

**25.** He addresses “the daughter of Zion” (<sup>2123</sup>Jeremiah 6:23); caution to the citizens of Jerusalem not to expose themselves to the enemy by going outside of the city walls,

**sword of the enemy** — literally “there is a sword to the enemy”; the enemy hath a sword.

**26. wallow ... in ashes** — (<sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 25:34 <sup>3001</sup>Micah 1:10). As they usually in mourning only “cast ashes on the head,” *wallowing in them* means something more, namely, so entirely to cover one’s self with ashes as to be like one who had rolled in them (<sup>3273</sup>Ezekiel 27:30).

**as for an only son** — (<sup>3180</sup>Amos 8:10 <sup>3820</sup>Zechariah 12:10).

**lamentation** — literally, “lamentation expressed by beating the breast.”

**27. tower ... fortress** — (<sup>3018</sup>Jeremiah 1:18), rather, “an assayer (and) explorer.” By a metaphor from metallurgy in <sup>3027</sup>Jeremiah 6:27-30, Jehovah, in conclusion, confirms the prophet in his office, and the latter sums up the description of the reprobate people on whom he had to work. The *Hebrew* for “assayer” (*English Version*, “tower”) is from a root “to try” metals. “Explorer” (*English Version*, “fortress”) is from an *Arabic* root, “keen-sighted”; or a *Hebrew* root, “cutting,” that is, separating the metal from the dross [EWALD]. GESENIUS translates as *English Version*, “fortress,” which does not accord with the previous “assayer.”

**28. grievous revolvers** — literally “contumacious of the contumacious,” that is, most contumacious, the *Hebrew* mode of expressing a superlative. So “the strong among the mighty,” that is, the strongest (<sup>3523</sup>Ezekiel 32:21). See <sup>3123</sup>Jeremiah 5:23 <sup>3046</sup>Hosea 4:16.

**walking with slanders** — (<sup>3004</sup>Jeremiah 9:4). “Going about for the purpose of slandering” [MAURER].

**brass**, etc. — that is, copper. It and “iron” being the baser and harder metals express the debased and obdurate character of the Jews (<sup>3804</sup>Isaiah 48:4 60:17).

**29. bellows ... burned** — So intense a heat is made that the very bellows are almost set on fire. ROSENMULLER translates not so well from a *Hebrew* root, “pant” or “snort,” referring to the sound of the bellows blown hard.

**lead** — employed to separate the baser metal from the silver, as quicksilver is now used. In other words, the utmost pains have been used to purify Israel in the furnace of affliction, but in vain (<sup>3018</sup>Jeremiah 5:3 <sup>4007</sup>1 Peter 1:7).

**consumed of the fire** — In the *Chetib*, or *Hebrew* text, the “consumed” is supplied out of the previous “burned.” Translating as ROSENMULLER, “pant,” this will be inadmissible; and the *Keri* (*Hebrew Margin*) division of



the *Hebrew* words will have to be read, to get “is consumed of the fire.” This is an argument for the translation, “are burned.”

*founder* — the refiner.

*wicked ... not plucked away* — answering to the dross which has no good metal to be separated, the mass being all dross.

**30. *Reprobate*** — silver so full of alloy as to be utterly worthless (<sup>-24102</sup>Isaiah 1:22). The Jews were fit only for rejection.

# CHAPTER 7

## Jeremiah 7:1-34.

### THE SEVENTH THROUGH NINTH CHAPTERS. DELIVERED IN THE BEGINNING OF JEHOIAKIM'S REIGN, ON THE OCCASION OF SOME PUBLIC FESTIVAL.

The prophet stood at the gate of the temple in order that the multitudes from the country might hear him. His life was threatened, it appears from <sup>2401E</sup>Jeremiah 26:1-9, for this prophecy, denouncing the fate of Shiloh as about to befall the temple at Jerusalem. The prophecy given in detail here is summarily referred to there. After Josiah's death the nation relapsed into idolatry through Jehoiakim's bad influence; the worship of Jehovah was, however, combined with it (<sup>2401E</sup>Jeremiah 7:4,10).

**2. *the gate*** — that is, the gate of the court of Israel within that of the women. Those whom Jeremiah addresses came through the gate leading into the court of the women, and the gate leading into the outer court, or court of the Gentiles ("these gates").

**3. *cause you to dwell*** — permit you still to dwell (<sup>2481E</sup>Jeremiah 18:11 26:13).

**4.** The Jews falsely thought that because their temple had been chosen by Jehovah as His peculiar dwelling, it could never be destroyed. Men think that ceremonial observances will supersede the need of holiness (<sup>2381E</sup>Isaiah 48:2 <sup>2411E</sup>Micah 3:11). The triple repetition of "the temple of Jehovah" expresses the intense confidence of the Jews (see <sup>2402E</sup>Jeremiah 22:29 <sup>2303E</sup>Isaiah 6:3).

***these*** — the temple buildings which the prophet points to with his finger (<sup>2402E</sup>Jeremiah 7:2).

**5. *For*** — "But" [MAURER].

***judgment*** — justice (<sup>2421E</sup>Jeremiah 22:3).

**6. *this place*** — this city and land (<sup>2402E</sup>Jeremiah 7:7).

***to your hurt*** — so <sup>2407E</sup>Jeremiah 7:19; "to the confusion or their own faces" (<sup>2430E</sup>Jeremiah 13:10 <sup>2103E</sup>Proverbs 8:36).

7. The apodosis to the “if ... if” (<sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 7:5,6).

*to dwell* — to continue to dwell.

*for ever and ever* — joined with “to dwell,” not with the words “gave to your fathers” (compare <sup>2488</sup>Jeremiah 3:18 <sup>6040</sup>Deuteronomy 4:40).

8. *that cannot profit* — MAURER translates, “so that you profit nothing” (see <sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 7:4 <sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 5:31).

9, 10. “Will ye steal ... *and then* come and stand before Me?”

*whom ye know not* — Ye have no grounds of “knowing” that *they* are gods; but I have manifested My Godhead by My law, by benefits conferred, and by miracles. This aggravates their crime [CALVIN] (<sup>0088</sup>Judges 5:8).

10. *And come* — And yet come (<sup>3239</sup>Ezekiel 23:39).

*We are delivered* — namely, from all impending calamities. In spite of the prophet’s threats, we have nothing to fear; we have offered our sacrifices, and therefore Jehovah will “deliver” us.

*to do all these abominations* — namely, those enumerated (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 7:9). These words are not to be connected with “we are delivered,” but thus: “Is it *with this design* that ye come and stand before Me in this house,” in order that having offered your worthless sacrifices ye may be taken into My favor and so do all these abominations (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 7:9) with impunity? [MAURER].

11. *den of robbers* — Do you regard My temple as being what robbers make their den, namely, an asylum wherein ye may obtain impunity for your abominations (<sup>2470</sup>Jeremiah 7:10)?

*seen it* — namely, that ye treat My house as if it were a den of thieves. Jehovah implies more than is expressed, “I have seen *and will punish it*” (<sup>2807</sup>Isaiah 56:7 <sup>4213</sup>Matthew 21:13).

12. *my place ... in Shiloh* — God caused His tabernacle to be set up in Shiloh in Joshua’s days (<sup>6810</sup>Joshua 18:1 <sup>0781</sup>Judges 18:31). In Eli’s time God gave the ark, which had been at Shiloh, into the hands of the Philistines (<sup>2306</sup>Jeremiah 26:6 <sup>0000</sup>1 Samuel 4:10,11 <sup>4786</sup>Psalms 78:56-61). Shiloh was situated between Beth-el and Shechem in Ephraim.

*at the first* — implying that *Shiloh* exceeded the Jewish temple in antiquity. But God’s favor is not tied down to localities (<sup>4074</sup>Acts 7:44).

**my people Israel** — Israel was *God's* people, yet He spared it not when rebellious: neither will He spare Judah, now that it rebels, though heretofore it has been His people.

**13. rising ... early** — implying unwearied earnestness in soliciting them (<sup><4025></sup>Jeremiah 7:25 <sup><24117></sup>Jeremiah 11:17 <sup><4635></sup>2 Chronicles 36:15).

**14. I gave** — and I therefore can revoke the gift for it is still Mine (<sup><4025></sup>Leviticus 25:23), now that ye fail in the only object for which it was given, the promotion of My glory.

**Shiloh** — as I ceased to dwell there, transferring My temple to Jerusalem; so I will cease to dwell at Jerusalem.

**15. your brethren** — children of Abraham, as much as you.

**whole seed of Ephraim** — They were superior to you in numbers and power: they were *ten* tribes: ye but *two*. “Ephraim,” as the leading tribe, stands for the whole ten tribes (<sup><2072></sup>2 Kings 17:23 <sup><4967></sup>Psalms 78:67,68).

**16.** When people are given up to judicial hardness of heart, intercessory prayer for them is unavailing (<sup><24114></sup>Jeremiah 11:14 14:11 15:1 <sup><4020></sup>Exodus 32:10 <sup><4156></sup>1 John 5:16).

**17.** Jehovah leaves it to Jeremiah himself to decide, is there not good reason that prayers should not be heard in behalf of such rebels?

**18. children ... fathers ... women** — Not merely isolated individuals practiced idolatry; young and old, men and women, and whole families, contributed their joint efforts to promote it. Oh, that there were the same zeal for the worship of God as there is for error (<sup><24417></sup>Jeremiah 44:17,19:19:13)!

**cakes ... queen of heaven** — Cakes were made of honey, fine flour, etc., in a round flat shape to resemble the disc of *the moon*, to which they were offered. Others read as *Margin*, “the frame of heaven,” that is, the planets generally; so the *Septuagint* here; but elsewhere the *Septuagint* translates, “queen of heaven.” The Phoenicians called the moon *Ashtoreth* or *Astarte*: the wife of Baal or Moloch, the *king* of heaven. The male and female pair of deities symbolized the generative powers of nature; hence arose the introduction of prostitution in the worship. The Babylonians worshipped *Ashtoreth* as *Mylitta*, that is, generative. Our Monday, or *Moon-day*, indicates the former prevalence of moon worship (see on <sup><24511></sup>Isaiah 65:11).

**that they may provoke me** — implying *design*: in worshipping strange gods they seemed as if *purposely* to provoke Jehovah.

19. Is it I that they provoke to anger? Is it not *themselves*? (<sup>4626</sup>Deuteronomy 32:16,21 <sup>4886</sup>Job 35:6,8 <sup>3086</sup>Proverbs 8:36).

20. *beast ... trees ... ground* — Why doth God vent His fury on these? On account of man, for whom these were created, that the sad spectacle may strike terror into him (<sup>4889</sup>Romans 8:20-22).

21. *Put ... burnt offerings unto ... sacrifices ... eat flesh* — Add the former (which the law required to be *wholly* burnt) to the latter (which were burnt only *in part*), and “eat flesh” even off the holocausts or burnt offerings. As far as I am concerned, saith Jehovah, you may do with one and the other alike. I will have neither (<sup>2311</sup>Isaiah 1:11 <sup>2883</sup>Hosea 8:13 <sup>3052</sup>Amos 5:21,22).

22. Not contradicting the divine obligation of the legal sacrifices. But, “I did not require sacrifices, unless combined with moral obedience” (<sup>4818</sup>Psalms 50:8 51:16,17). The superior claim of the *moral* above the *positive* precepts of the law was marked by the ten commandments having been delivered first, and by the two tables of stone being deposited alone in the ark (<sup>4886</sup>Deuteronomy 5:6). The negative in *Hebrew* often supplies the want of the comparative: not excluding the thing denied, but only implying the prior claim of the thing set in opposition to it (<sup>2809</sup>Hosea 6:6). “I will have mercy, and *not* sacrifice” (<sup>4952</sup>1 Samuel 15:22). Love to God is the supreme *end*, external observances only *means* towards that end. “The mere sacrifice was not *so much* what I commanded, as the sincere submission to My will gives to the sacrifice all its virtue” [MAGEE, *Atonement*, Note 57].

23. (<sup>4956</sup>Exodus 15:26 19:5).

24. *hearkened not* — They did not give even a partial hearing to Me (<sup>4811</sup>Psalms 81:11,12).

*imagination* — rather, as *Margin*, “the stubbornness”

*backward*, etc. — (<sup>2427</sup>Jeremiah 2:27 32:33 <sup>2806</sup>Hosea 4:16).

25. *rising ... early* — (<sup>2473</sup>Jeremiah 7:13).

26. *hardened ... neck* — (<sup>4627</sup>Deuteronomy 31:27 <sup>2804</sup>Isaiah 48:4 <sup>4051</sup>Acts 7:51).

*worse than their fathers* — (<sup>2462</sup>Jeremiah 16:12). In <sup>2472</sup>Jeremiah 7:22 He had said, “*your* fathers”; here He says, “*their* fathers”; the change to the third person marks growing alienation from them. He no longer addresses *themselves*, as it would be a waste of words in the case of such hardened rebels.

**27. *Therefore*** — rather, “*Though* thou speak ... yet they will not hearken” [MAURER], (<sup><3100></sup>Ezekiel 2:7), a trial to the prophet’s faith; though he knew his warnings would be unheeded, still he was to give them in obedience to God.

**28. *unto them*** — that is, in reference to them.

***a nation*** — The word usually applied to the Gentile *nations* is here applied to the Jews, as being east off and classed by God among the Gentiles.

***nor receiveth correction*** — (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 5:3).

***truth ... perished*** — (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 9:3).

**29.** Jeremiah addresses Jerusalem under the figure of a woman, who, in grief for her lost children, deprives her head of its chief ornament and goes up to the hills to weep (<sup><0113></sup>Judges 11:37,38 <sup><2347></sup>Isaiah 15:2).

***hair*** — flowing locks, like those of a Nazarite.

***high places*** — The scene of her idolatries is to be the scene of her mourning (<sup><3083></sup>Jeremiah 3:21).

***generation of his wrath*** — the generation with which He is wroth. So <sup><3005></sup>Isaiah 10:6; “the people of My wrath.”

**30. *set their abominations in the house*** — (<sup><2424></sup>Jeremiah 32:34 <sup><2204></sup>2 Kings 21:4,7 23:4 <sup><3085></sup>Ezekiel 8:5-14).

**31. *high places of Tophet*** — the *altars* [HORSLEY] of Tophet; erected to Moloch, on the heights along the south of the valley facing Zion.

***burn ... sons*** — (<sup><1963></sup>Psalm 106:38).

***commanded ... not*** — put for, “I forbade expressly” (<sup><6173></sup>Deuteronomy 17:3 12:31). See on <sup><3123></sup>Jeremiah 2:23; <sup><2333></sup>Isaiah 30:33.

**32. *valley of slaughter*** — so named because of the great slaughter of the Jews about to take place at Jerusalem: a just retribution of their sin in slaying their children to Moloch in Tophet.

***no place*** — no room, namely, to bury in, so many shall be those slain by the Chaldeans (<sup><2491></sup>Jeremiah 19:11 <sup><3185></sup>Ezekiel 6:5).

**33. *fray*** — *scare* or *frighten* (<sup><1833></sup>Deuteronomy 28:26). Typical of the last great battle between the Lord’s host and the apostasy (<sup><6677></sup>Revelation 19:17,18,21).

**34.** Referring to the joyous songs and music with which the bride and bridegroom were escorted in the procession to the home of the latter from that of the former; a custom still prevalent in the East (<sup>21169</sup>Jeremiah 16:9 <sup>21170</sup>Isaiah 24:7,8 <sup>6183</sup>Revelation 18:23).

# CHAPTER 8

## JEREMIAH 8:1-22.

### THE JEW'S COMING PUNISHMENT; THEIR UNIVERSAL AND INCURABLE IMPENITENCE.

1. The victorious Babylonians were about to violate the sanctuaries of the dead in search of plunder; for ornaments, treasures, and insignia of royalty were usually buried with kings. Or rather, their purpose was to do the *greatest dishonor* to the dead (<sup><2346></sup>Isaiah 14:19).

2. *spread ... before the sun*, etc. — retribution in kind. The very objects which received their idolatries shall unconcernedly witness their dishonor.

*lover ... served ... after ... walked ... sought ... worshipped* — Words are accumulated, as if enough could not be said fully to express the mad fervor of their idolatry to the heavenly host (<sup><1236></sup>2 Kings 23:5).

*nor ... buried* — (<sup><2276></sup>Jeremiah 22:19).

*dung* — (<sup><2122></sup>Jeremiah 9:22 <sup><1880></sup>Psalms 83:10).

3. The survivors shall be still worse off than the dead (<sup><802></sup>Job 3:21,22 <sup><6106></sup>Revelation 9:6).

*which remain in all the places* — “in all places of them that remain, whither I ... that is, in all places whither I have driven them that remain [MAURER].

4. “Is it not a natural instinct, that if one falls, he *rises again*; if one turns away (that is, wanders from the way), he will *return* to the point from which he wandered? Why then does not Jerusalem do so?” He plays on the double sense of *return*; literal and metaphorical (<sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 3:12 4:1).

5. *slidden ... backsliding* — rather, as the *Hebrew* is the same as in <sup><2484></sup>Jeremiah 8:4, to which this verse refers, “*turned away with a perpetual turning away.*”

*perpetual* — in contrast to the “arise” (“rise again,” <sup><2484></sup>Jeremiah 8:4).

*refuse to return* — in contrast to, “shall he ... not return” (<sup><2484></sup>Jeremiah 8:4 <sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 5:3).



**6. *spake not aright*** — that is, not so as *penitently to confess* that they acted wrong. Compare what follows.

***every one ... his course*** — The *Keri* reads “course,” but the *Chetib*, “courses.” “They persevere in the *courses* whatever they have once entered on.” Their wicked *ways* were *diversified*.

***horse rusheth*** — literally, “pours himself forth,” as water that has burst its embankment. The *mad rapidity* of the war horse is the point of comparison (<sup><3899></sup>Job 39:19-25).

**7.** The instinct of the migratory birds leads them with unfailling regularity to return every spring from their winter abodes in summer climes (So 2:12); but God’s people will not return to Him even when the winter of His wrath is past, and He invites them back to the spring of His favor.

***in the heaven*** — emphatical. The birds whose very element is the *air*, in which they are never at rest, yet show a steady sagacity, which God’s people do not.

***times*** — namely, of migrating, and of returning.

***my people*** — This honorable title aggravates the unnatural perversity of the Jews towards *their* God.

***know not***, etc. — (<sup><3184></sup>Jeremiah 5:4 5 <sup><2003></sup>Isaiah 1:3).

**8. *law ... with us*** — (<sup><3127></sup>Romans 2:17). Possessing the law, on which they prided themselves, the Jews might have become the wisest of nations; but by their neglecting its precepts, the law became given “in vain,” as far as they were concerned.

***scribes*** — copyists. “In vain” copies were multiplied. MAURER translates, “The false pen of the scribes hath converted it [the law] into a lie.” See *Margin*, which agrees with *Vulgate*.

**9. *dismayed*** — confounded.

***what wisdom*** — literally, “the wisdom of what?” that is, “wisdom in what respect?” the Word of the Lord being the only true source of wisdom (<sup><3385></sup>Psalms 119:98-100 <sup><2007></sup>Proverbs 1:7 9:10).

**10-12.** Repeated from <sup><3162></sup>Jeremiah 6:12-15. See a similar repetition, <sup><3185></sup>Jeremiah 8:15 <sup><3449></sup>Jeremiah 14:19.

***inherit*** — *succeed to the possession* of them.

**11.** (<sup><3330></sup>Ezekiel 13:10).

**13. *surely consume*** — literally, “gathering I will gather,” or “consuming I will consume.”

***no grapes ... nor figs*** — (<sup>2007</sup>Joel 1:7 <sup>4219</sup>Matthew 21:19).

***things that I have given ... shall pass away*** — rather, “I will appoint to them those who shall overwhelm (pass over) them,” that is, I will send the enemy upon them [MAURER]. *English Version* accords well with the context; Though their grapes and figs ripen, they shall not be allowed to enjoy them.

**14. *assemble*** — for defense.

***let us be silent*** — not assault the enemy, but merely defend ourselves in quiet, until the storm blow over.

***put us to silence*** — brought us to that state that we can no longer resist the foe; implying silent despair.

***water of gall*** — literally, “water of the poisonous plant,” perhaps the poppy (<sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 9:15 23:15).

**15. Repeated** (<sup>2449</sup>Jeremiah 14:19).

***We looked for*** — owing to the expectations held out by the false prophets.

***health*** — healing; that is, restoration from adversity.

**16. *his horses*** — the Chaldean’s.

***was heard*** — the prophetic past for the future.

***from Daniel*** — bordering on Phoenicia. This was to be Nebuchadnezzar’s route in invading Israel; the *cavalry* in advance of the infantry would scour the country.

***strong ones*** — a poetical phrase for *steeds*, peculiar to Jeremiah (<sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 47:3; compare <sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 4:13,29 6:23).

**17. *I*** — Jehovah.

***cockatrices*** — basilisks (<sup>2508</sup>Isaiah 11:8), that is, enemies whose destructive power no means, by persuasion or otherwise, can counteract. Serpent-charmers in the East entice serpents by music, and by a particular pressure on the neck render them incapable of darting (<sup>1804</sup>Psalms 58:4,5).

**18.** (<sup>2204</sup>Isaiah 22:4). The lamentation of the prophet for the impending calamity of his country.

**against sorrow** — or, *with respect to sorrow*. MAURER translates, “Oh, my exhilaration as to sorrow!” that is, “Oh, that exhilaration (‘comfort’, from an *Arabic* root, to *shine* as the rising sun) would shine upon me as to my sorrow!”

**in me** — within me.

19. The prophet in vision hears the cry of the exiled Jews, wondering that God should have delivered them up to the enemy, seeing that He is Zion’s king, dwelling in her (<sup>381B</sup>Micah 3:11). In the latter half of the verse God replies that their own idolatry, not want of faithfulness on His part, is the cause.

**because of them that dwell in a far country** — rather, “from a land of distances,” that is, a distant land (<sup>381B</sup>Isaiah 39:3). *English Version* understands the cry to be of the Jews *in their own land*, because of the enemy *coming from their far-off country*.

**strange vanities** — foreign gods.

20. Proverbial. Meaning: One season of hope after another has passed, but the looked-for deliverance never came, and now all hope is gone.

21. **black** — sad in visage with grief (<sup>381B</sup>Joel 2:6).

22. **balm** — *balsam*; to be applied to the wounds of my people. Brought into Judea first from Arabia Felix, by the queen of Sheba, in Solomon’s time [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 8.2]. The *opobalsamum* of PLINY; or else [BOCHART] the resin drawn from the terebinth. It abounded in Gilead, east of Jordan, where, in consequence, many “physicians” established themselves (<sup>381B</sup>Jeremiah 46:11 51:8 <sup>037Z</sup>Genesis 37:25 43:11).

**health ... recovered** — The *Hebrew* is literally, “lengthening out ... gone up”; hence, *the long bandage applied* to bind up a wound. So the *Arabic* also [GESENIUS].

# CHAPTER 9

## JEREMIAH 9:1-26.

### JEREMIAH'S LAMENTATION FOR THE JEWS' SINS AND CONSEQUENT PUNISHMENT.

1. This verse is more fitly joined to the last chapter, as <sup><3023></sup>Jeremiah 9:23 in the *Hebrew* (compare <sup><3204></sup>Isaiah 22:4 <sup><3211></sup>Lamentations 2:11 3:48).

2. *lodging-place* — a caravanseral for caravans, or companies travelling in the desert, remote from towns. It was a square building enclosing an open court. Though a lonely and often filthy dwelling, Jeremiah would prefer even it to the comforts of Jerusalem, so as to be removed from the pollutions of the capital (<sup><3557></sup>Psalms 55:7,8).

3. *bend ... tongues ... for lies* — that is, with lies as their arrows; they direct lies on their tongue as their bow (<sup><3668></sup>Psalms 64:3,4).

*not valiant for ... truth* — (<sup><3028></sup>Jeremiah 7:28). MAURER translates, "They do not prevail by truth" or *faith* (<sup><3924></sup>Psalms 12:4). Their *tongue*, not *faith*, is their weapon.

*upon ... earth* — rather, "in the land."

*know not me* — (<sup><3001></sup>Hosea 4:1).

4. *supplant* — literally, "trip up by the heel" (<sup><3028></sup>Hosea 12:3).

*walk with slanders* — (<sup><3068></sup>Jeremiah 6:28).

5. *weary themselves* — *are at laborious pains* to act perversely [MAURER]. Sin is a hard bondage (<sup><3013></sup>Habakkuk 2:13).

6. *Thine* — God addresses Jeremiah, who dwelt in the midst of deceitful men.

*refuse to know me* — Their ignorance of God is wilful (<sup><3008></sup>Jeremiah 9:3 5:4,5).

7. *melt ... try them* — by sending calamities on them.

*for how shall I do* — "What *else* can I do for the sake of the daughter of My people?" [MAURER], (<sup><3027></sup>Isaiah 1:25 <sup><3008></sup>Malachi 3:3).

8. *tongue ... arrow shot out* — rather, “a murdering arrow” [MAURER] (<sup>2498</sup>Jeremiah 9:3).

*speaketh peaceably ... in heart ... layeth ... wait* — layeth his ambush [HENDERSON], (<sup>4852</sup>Psalms 55:21).

9. (<sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 5:9,29).

10. Jeremiah breaks in upon Jehovah’s threats of wrath with lamentation for his desolated country.

*mountains* — once cultivated and fruitful: the hillsides were cultivated in terraces between the rocks.

*habitations of ... wilderness* — rather, “the pleasant herbage (literally, ‘the choice parts’ of any thing) of the pasture plain.” The *Hebrew* for “wilderness” expresses not a barren desert, but an untilled plain, fit for pasture.

*burned up* — because no one waters them, the inhabitants being all gone.

*none can pass through them* — much less *inhabit* them.

*fowl* — (<sup>2025</sup>Jeremiah 4:25).

11. *And* — omit “And.” Jehovah here resumes His speech from <sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 9:9.

*heaps* — (see on <sup>2357</sup>Isaiah 25:2).

*dragons* — jackals.

12. Rather, “Who is a wise man? (that is, *Whosoever* has inspired wisdom, <sup>6185</sup>2 Peter 3:15); let him understand this (weigh well the evils impending, and the causes of their being sent); and he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken (that is, *whosoever is prophetically inspired*), let him declare it to his fellow countrymen,” if haply they may be roused to repentance, the only hope of safety.

13. Answer to the “for what the land perisheth” (<sup>2492</sup>Jeremiah 9:12).

14. (<sup>2472</sup>Jeremiah 7:24).

*Baalim* — plural of Baal, to express his supposed manifold powers.

*fathers taught them* — (<sup>8014</sup>Galatians 1:14 <sup>6018</sup>1 Peter 1:18). We are not to follow the errors of the fathers, but the authority of Scripture and of God [JEROME].

15. *feed* — (<sup>2184</sup>Jeremiah 8:14 23:15 <sup>2301</sup>Psalms 80:5).

16. *nor their fathers have known* — alluding to <sup>2194</sup>Jeremiah 9:14, “Their fathers taught them” idolatry; therefore the children shall be scattered to a land which neither their fathers nor they have known.

*send a sword after them* — Not even in flight shall they be safe.

17. *mourning women* — hired to heighten lamentation by plaintive cries baring the breast, beating the arms, and suffering the hair to flow dishevelled (<sup>2135</sup>2 Chronicles 35:25 <sup>2135</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:5 <sup>2102</sup>Matthew 9:23).

*cunning* — skilled in wailing.

18. (<sup>2147</sup>Jeremiah 14:17).

19. The cry of “the mourning women.”

*spoiled* — laid waste.

*dwellings cast us out* — fulfilling <sup>2183</sup>Leviticus 18:28 20:22. CALVIN translates, “*The enemy have cast down our habitations.*”

20. *Yet* — rather, “Only” [HENDERSON]. This particle calls attention to what follows.

*teach ... daughters wailing* — The deaths will be so many that there will be a lack of mourning women to bewail them. The mothers, therefore, must teach their daughters the science to supply the want.

21. *death ... windows* — The death-inflicting soldiery, finding the doors closed, burst in by the windows.

*to cut off ... children from ... streets* — Death cannot be said to enter the windows to cut off the children in the streets, but to cut them off, so as no more to play in the streets without (<sup>2305</sup>Zechariah 8:5).

22. *saieth the Lord* — continuing the thread of discourse from <sup>2101</sup>Jeremiah 9:20.

*dung* — (<sup>2102</sup>Jeremiah 8:2).

*handful ... none ... gather them* — implying that the handful has been so trodden as to be not worth even the poor *gleaner's* effort to gather it. Or the Eastern custom may be referred to: the reaper cuts the grain and is followed by another who *gathers it*. This grain shall not be worth gathering. How galling to the pride of the Jews to hear that so shall their carcasses be trodden contemptuously under foot!

**23. *wisdom*** — political sagacity; as if *it* could rescue from the impending calamities.

***might*** — military prowess.

**24.** Nothing but an experimental knowledge of God will save the nation.

***understandeth*** — *theoretically*; in the intellect.

***knoweth*** — *practically*: so as to walk in My ways (<sup><3276></sup>Jeremiah 22:16 <sup><3221></sup>Job 22:21 <sup><4131></sup>1 Corinthians 1:31).

***loving kindness*** — God's mercy is put in the first and highest place, because without it we should flee from God in fear and despair.

***judgment ... righteousness*** — *loving-kindness* towards the godly; *judgment* towards the ungodly; *righteousness* the most perfect fairness in all cases [GROTIUS]. *Faithfulness to His promises* to preserve the godly, as well as stern execution of judgment on the ungodly, is included in "righteousness."

***in the earth*** — contrary to the dogma of some philosophers, that God does not interfere in terrestrial concerns (<sup><3581></sup>Psalms 58:11).

***in these ... I delight*** — as well in doing them as in seeing them done by others (<sup><3168></sup>Micah 6:8 7:18).

**25. *with the uncircumcised*** — rather, "all that are circumcised *in uncircumcision*" [HENDERSON]. The *Hebrew* is an *abstract* term, not a *concrete*, as *English Version* translates, and as the pious "circumcised" is. The nations specified, Egypt, Judah, etc., were *outwardly* "circumcised," but *in heart* were "uncircumcised." The heathen nations were defiled, in spite of their literal circumcision, by idolatry. The Jews, with all their glorying in their spiritual privileges, were no better (<sup><2404></sup>Jeremiah 4:4 <sup><5109></sup>Deuteronomy 10:16 30:6 <sup><4128></sup>Romans 2:28,29 <sup><5121></sup>Colossians 2:11). However, <sup><2518></sup>Ezekiel 31:18 32:19, may imply that the Egyptians were uncircumcised; and it is uncertain as to the other nations specified whether they were at that early time circumcised. HERODOTUS says the Egyptians were so; but others think this applies only to the priests and others having a sacred character, not to the mass of the nation; so *English Version* may be fight (<sup><4128></sup>Romans 2:28,29).

**26. *Egypt*** — put first to degrade Judah, who, though in privileges above the Gentiles, by unfaithfulness sank below them ... Egypt, too, was the power in which the Jews were so prone to trust, and by whose instigation they, as well as the other peoples specified, revolted from Babylon.

***in the utmost corners*** — rather, “having the hair shaven (or *clipped*) in angles,” that is, having the beard on the cheek narrowed or *cut*: a Canaanitish custom, forbidden to the Israelites (<sup>18927</sup>Leviticus 19:27 21:5). The Arabs are hereby referred to (compare <sup>30523</sup>Jeremiah 25:23 49:32), as the words in apposition show, “that dwell in the wilderness.”

***uncircumcised ... uncircumcised in the heart*** — The addition of “in the heart” in *Israel’s* case marks *its* greater guilt in proportion to its greater privileges, as compared with the rest.



# CHAPTER 10

## ☞ JEREMIAH 10:1-25.

### CONTRAST BETWEEN THE IDOLS AND JEHOVAH. THE PROPHET'S LAMENTATION AND PRAYER.

1. *Israel* — the Jews, the surviving representatives of the nation.
2. EICHORN thinks the reference here to be to some celestial portent which had appeared at that time, causing the Jews' dismay. Probably the reference is general, namely, to the Chaldeans, famed as astrologers, through contact with whom the Jews were likely to fall into the same superstition.  
*way* — the precepts or ordinances (☞ Leviticus 18:3 ☞ Acts 9:2).  
*signs of heaven* — The Gentiles did not acknowledge a Great First Cause: many thought events depended on the power of the stars, which some, as PLATO, thought to be endowed with spirit and reason. All heavenly phenomena, eclipses, comets, etc. are included.  
*one cutteth a tree*, etc. — rather, "It (that which they busy themselves about: a sample of their 'customs') is a tree cut out of the forest" [MAURER].
4. *fasten ... move not* — that is, that it may stand upright without risk of falling, which the god (!) would do, if left to itself (☞ Isaiah 41:7).
5. *upright* — or, "They are of turned work, resembling a palm tree" [MAURER]. The point of comparison between the idol and the palm is in the pillar-like uprightness of the latter, it having no branches except at the top.  
*speak not* — (☞ Psalm 115:5).  
*cannot go* — that is, walk (☞ Psalm 115:7 ☞ Isaiah 46:1,7).  
*neither ... do good* — (☞ Isaiah 41:23).
6. *none* — literally, "no particle of nothing": nothing whatever; the strongest possible denial (☞ Exodus 15:11 ☞ Psalm 86:8,10).
7. (☞ Revelation 15:4).

**to thee doth it appertain** — to Thee it properly belongs, namely, that Thou shouldest be “feared” (taken out of the previous “fear Thee”) (compare <sup><327></sup>Ezekiel 21:27). He alone is the *becoming* object of worship. To worship any other is unseemly and an infringement of His inalienable prerogative.

**none** — nothing whatever (see on <sup><240></sup>Jeremiah 10:6; <sup><380></sup>Psalms 89:6).

**8. altogether** — rather, “all alike” [MAURER]. Even the so-called “wise” men (<sup><240></sup>Jeremiah 10:7) of the Gentiles are on a level with the *brutes* and “foolish,” namely, because they connive at the popular idolatry (compare <sup><612></sup>Romans 1:21-28). Therefore, in Daniel and Revelation, the world power is represented under a bestial form. Man divests himself of his true humanity, and sinks to the level of the *brute*, when he severs his connection with God (<sup><135></sup>Psalms 115:8 Jon 2:8).

**stock is a doctrine of vanities** — The stock (put for the worship of *all idols whatever*, made out of a stock) speaks for itself that the whole theory of idolatry is vanity (<sup><240></sup>Isaiah 44:9-11). CASTALIO translates, “the very wood itself confuting the vanity” (of the idol).

**9.** Everything connected with idols is the result of human effort.

**Silver spread** — (See on <sup><312></sup>Isaiah 30:22; <sup><240></sup>Isaiah 40:19).

**Tarshish** — Tartessus, in Spain, famed for precious metals.

**Uphaz** — (<sup><705></sup>Daniel 10:5). As the *Septuagint* in the *Syrian Hexapla* in the *Margin*, THEODOTUS, the *Syrian* and *Chaldee versions* have “Ophir,” GESENIUS thinks “Uphaz” a colloquial corruption (one letter only being changed) for “Ophir.” Ophir, in <sup><102></sup>Genesis 10:29, is mentioned among Arabian countries. Perhaps Malacca is the country meant, the natives of which still call their gold mines Ophirs. HEEREN thinks Ophir the general name for the rich countries of the south, on the Arabian, African, and Indian coasts; just as our term, East Indies.

**cunning** — skillful.

**10. true God** — literally, “God Jehovah is truth”; not merely *true*, that is, veracious, but *truth* in the reality of His essence, as opposed to the “vanity” or emptiness which all idols are (<sup><240></sup>Jeremiah 10:3,8,15 <sup><415></sup>2 Chronicles 15:3 <sup><330></sup>Psalms 31:5 <sup><130></sup>1 John 5:20).

**living God** — (<sup><130></sup>John 5:26 <sup><507></sup>1 Timothy 6:17). He hath life *in Himself* which no creature has. All else “live in Him” (<sup><417></sup>Acts 17:28). In contrast to *dead* idols.

**everlasting** — (<sup><3906></sup>Psalm 10:16). In contrast to the *temporary* existence of all other objects of worship.

**11.** This verse is in *Chaldee*, Jeremiah supplying his countrymen with a formula of reply to Chaldee idolaters in the tongue most intelligible to the latter. There may be also derision intended in imitating their barbarous dialect. ROSENMULLER objects to this view, that not merely the words put in the mouths of the Israelites, but *Jeremiah's* own introductory words, “Thus shall ye say to them,” are in *Chaldee*, and thinks it to be a *marginal* gloss. But it is found in all the oldest versions. It was an old *Greek* saying: “Whoever thinks himself a god besides the one God, let him make another world” (<sup><3916></sup>Psalm 96:5).

**shall perish** — (<sup><2125></sup>Isaiah 2:18 <sup><3812></sup>Zechariah 13:2).

**these heavens** — the speaker pointing to them with his fingers.

**12.** Continuation of <sup><2100></sup>Jeremiah 10:10, after the interruption of the thread of the discourse in <sup><2101></sup>Jeremiah 10:11 (<sup><3905></sup>Psalm 136:5,6).

**13.** Literally, “At the voice of His giving forth,” that is, when He thunders. (<sup><3834></sup>Job 38:34 <sup><3925></sup>Psalm 29:3-5).

**waters** — (<sup><1007></sup>Genesis 1:7) — above the firmament; heavy rains accompany thunder.

**vapours ... ascend** — (<sup><3926></sup>Psalm 135:7).

**treasures** — His stores.

**14. in his knowledge** — “is rendered brutish *by* his skill,” namely, in idol-making (<sup><2108></sup>Jeremiah 10:8,9). Thus the parallel, “confounded by the graven image,” corresponds (so <sup><3817></sup>Jeremiah 51:17). Others not so well translate, “without knowledge,” namely, of God (see <sup><3927></sup>Isaiah 42:17 45:16 <sup><3105></sup>Hosea 4:6).

**15. errors** — deceptions; from a *Hebrew* root, “to stutter”; then meaning “to mock.”

**their visitation they** — When God shall punish the idol-worshippers (namely, by Cyrus), the idols themselves shall be destroyed [ROSENMULLER] (<sup><2101></sup>Jeremiah 10:11).

**16. portion** — from a *Hebrew* root, “to divide.” God is *the all-sufficient Good* of His people (<sup><0820></sup>Numbers 18:20 <sup><3915></sup>Psalm 16:5 73:26 <sup><3124></sup>Lamentations 3:24).

**not like them** — not like the idols, a vain object of trust (<sup><4624></sup>Deuteronomy 32:31).

**former of all things** — the Fashioner (as a potter, <sup><2648></sup>Isaiah 64:8) of the universe.

**rod of his inheritance** — The portion marked off as His inheritance by the measuring rod (<sup><3682></sup>Ezekiel 48:21). As He is their portion, so are they His portion (<sup><4634></sup>Deuteronomy 32:9). A reciprocal tie (compare <sup><4619></sup>Jeremiah 51:19 <sup><4748></sup>Psalms 74:2, *Margin*). Others make “rod” refer to the tribal rod or scepter.

**17. wares** — thine effects or movable goods (<sup><3418></sup>Ezekiel 12:3). Prepare for migrating as captives to Babylon. The address is to Jerusalem, as representative of the whole people.

**inhabitant of the fortress** — rather, “*inhabitr*ess of the fortress.” Though thou now seemest to *inhabit* an impregnable *fortress*, thou shalt have to remove. “The land” is the champaign region opposed to the “fortified” cities. The “fortress” being taken, the whole “land” will share the disaster. HENDERSON translates, “Gather up thy *packages* from the ground.” ROSENMULLER, for “fortress,” translates, “siege,” that is, the besieged city. The various articles, in this view, are supposed to be lying about in confusion on the ground during the siege.

**18. sling out** — expressing the violence and suddenness of the removal to Babylon. A similar image occurs in <sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 16:13 <sup><4929></sup>1 Samuel 25:29 <sup><3277></sup>Isaiah 22:17,18.

**at this once** — at this time, now.

**find it so** — find it by experience, that is, feel it (<sup><2650></sup>Ezekiel 6:10). MICHAELIS translates, “I will bind them together (as in a sling) that they may reach the goal” (Babylon). *English Version* is best: “that they may find it so as I have said” (<sup><4029></sup>Numbers 23:19 <sup><2650></sup>Ezekiel 6:10).

**19. Judea bewails its calamity.**

**wound** — the stroke I suffer under.

**I must bear** — not humble submission to God’s will (<sup><3009></sup>Micah 7:9), but sullen impenitence. Or, rather, it is prophetic of their ultimate acknowledgment of their guilt as the cause of their calamity (<sup><2389></sup>Lamentations 3:39).

**20. *tabernacle is spoiled*** — metaphor from the tents of nomadic life; as these are taken down in a few moments, so as not to leave a vestige of them, so Judea (<sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 4:20).

***cords*** — with which the coverings of the tent are extended.

***curtains*** — tent-curtains.

**21. *pastors*** — the rulers, civil and religious. This verse gives the cause of the impending calamity.

**22. *bruit*** — rumor of invasion. The antithesis is between the *voice of God* in His prophets to whom they turned a deaf ear, and the *cry of the enemy*, a new teacher, whom they must hear [CALVIN].

***north country*** — Babylon (<sup>201B</sup>Jeremiah 1:15).

**23.** Despairing of influencing the people, he turns to God.

***way of man not in himself*** — (<sup>202B</sup>Proverbs 16:1 20:24 <sup>203B</sup>James 4:13,14). I know, O Jehovah, that the march of the Babylonian conqueror against me (Jeremiah identifying himself with his people) is not at his own discretion, but is overruled by Thee (<sup>204B</sup>Isaiah 10:5-7; compare <sup>205B</sup>Jeremiah 10:19).

***that walketh*** — when he walketh, that is, sets out in any undertaking.

***direct ... steps*** — to give a prosperous issue to (<sup>206B</sup>Psalms 73:23).

**24, 25.** Since I (my nation) must be corrected (justice requiring it because of the deep guilt of the nation), I do not deprecate all chastisement, but pray only for moderation in it (<sup>207B</sup>Jeremiah 30:11 <sup>208B</sup>Psalms 6:1 38:1); and that the full tide of Thy fury may be poured out on the heathen invaders for their cruelty towards *Thy* people. <sup>209B</sup>Psalms 79:6,7, a psalm to be referred to the time of the captivity, its composer probably repeated this from Jeremiah. The imperative, "Pour out," is used instead of the future, expressing vividly the *certainty* of the prediction, and that the word of God itself effects its own declarations. Accordingly, the Jews were restored after *correction*; the Babylonians were utterly extinguished.

***know thee ... call ... on thy name*** — Knowledge of God is the beginning of piety; *calling* on Him the fruit.

***heathen ... Jacob*** — He reminds God of the distinction He has made between His people whom *Jacob* represents, and the heathen aliens. *Correct* us as Thy adopted sons, the seed of Jacob; *destroy* them as outcasts (<sup>210B</sup>Zechariah 1:14,15,21).

# CHAPTER 11

## JEREMIAH 11:1-23.

### EPITOME OF THE COVENANT FOUND IN THE TEMPLE IN JOSIAH'S REIGN. JUDAH'S REVOLT FROM IT, AND GOD'S CONSEQUENT WRATH.

2. *this covenant* — alluding to the book of the law (<sup><6319></sup>Deuteronomy 31:26) found in the temple by Hilkiah the high priest, five years after Jeremiah's call to the prophetic office (<sup><1218></sup>2 Kings 22:8-23:25).

*Hear ye* — Others besides Jeremiah were to promulgate God's will to the people; it was the duty of the priests to read the law to them (<sup><3117></sup>Malachi 2:7).

3. (<sup><6723></sup>Deuteronomy 27:26 <sup><8810></sup>Galatians 3:10).

4. *in the day* — that is, when. The Sinaitic covenant was made some time after the exodus, but the two events are so connected as to be viewed as one.

*iron furnace* — (<sup><6003></sup>Deuteronomy 4:20 <sup><10551></sup>1 Kings 8:51). "Furnace" expresses the searching ordeal; "iron," the long duration of it. The furnace was *of earth*, not *of iron* (<sup><3916></sup>Psalms 12:6); a furnace, in heat and duration enough to melt even iron. God's deliverance of them from such an ordeal aggravates their present guilt.

*do them* — namely, the words of the covenant (<sup><21133></sup>Jeremiah 11:3).

*so*, etc. — (<sup><6333></sup>Leviticus 26:3,12).

5. *oath* — (<sup><49459></sup>Psalms 105:9,10).

*a land flowing with milk and honey* — (See on <sup><0448></sup>Numbers 14:8).

*as it is this day* — These are the concluding words of God to the Israelites when formerly brought out of Egypt, "Obey ... that I may *at this time* make good the promise I made to your fathers, to give," etc. [MAURER]. *English Version* makes the words apply to *Jeremiah's time*, "As ye know at this time, that God's promise has been fulfilled," namely, in Israel's acquisition of Canaan.

**So be it** — *Hebrew, Amen.* Taken from <sup><6275></sup>Deuteronomy 27:15-26.

Jeremiah hereby solemnly concurs in the justice of the curses pronounced there (see <sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 11:3).

**6.** Jeremiah was to take a prophetic tour throughout Judah, to proclaim everywhere the denunciations in the book of the law found in the temple.

**Hear ... do** — ( <sup><4103></sup>Romans 2:13 <sup><3022></sup>James 1:22).

**7. rising early** — ( <sup><2073></sup>Jeremiah 7:13).

**8. imagination** — rather, “stubbornness.”

**will bring** — The words, “even unto this day” ( <sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 11:7), confirm *English Version* rather than the rendering of ROSENMULLER: “I brought upon them.”

**words** — threats ( <sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 11:3 <sup><6275></sup>Deuteronomy 27:15-26).

**9. conspiracy** — a *deliberate combination* against God and against Josiah’s reformation. Their idolatry is not the result of a hasty impulse ( <sup><3936></sup>Psalms 83:5 <sup><3225></sup>Ezekiel 22:25).

**11. cry unto me** — contrasted with “cry unto the gods,” ( <sup><2412></sup>Jeremiah 11:12).

**not hearken** — ( <sup><3841></sup>Psalms 18:41 <sup><3028></sup>Proverbs 1:28 <sup><2015></sup>Isaiah 1:15 <sup><3304></sup>Micah 3:4).

**12. cry unto the gods ... not save** — ( <sup><6327></sup>Deuteronomy 32:37,38). Compare this verse and beginning of <sup><2413></sup>Jeremiah 11:13 <sup><2028></sup>Jeremiah 2:28.

**in the time of their trouble** — that is, calamity ( <sup><2027></sup>Jeremiah 2:27).

**13. shameful thing** — *Hebrew*, “shame,” namely, the idol, not merely shameful, but the *essence* of all that is shameful ( <sup><2424></sup>Jeremiah 3:24 <sup><3940></sup>Hosea 9:10), which will bring shame and confusion on yourselves [CALVIN].

**14.** There is a climax of guilt which admits of no further intercessory prayer ( <sup><1230></sup>Exodus 32:10, in the *Chaldee version*, “leave off praying”; <sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 7:16 <sup><1941></sup>1 Samuel 16:1 <sup><1535></sup>15:35 <sup><3156></sup>1 John 5:16). Our mind should be at one with God in all that He is doing, even in the rejection of the reprobate.

**for their trouble** — on account of their trouble. Other manuscripts read, “in the time of their trouble” a gloss from <sup><2412></sup>Jeremiah 11:12.

**15. my beloved** — My elect people, Judea; this aggravates their ingratitude ( <sup><2427></sup>Jeremiah 12:7).

**lewdness with many** — (<sup><3165></sup>Ezekiel 16:25). Rather, “that great (or, manifold) enormity”; literally, “the enormity, the manifold”; namely, their idolatry, which made their worship of God in the temple a mockery (compare <sup><3170></sup>Jeremiah 7:10 <sup><3239></sup>Ezekiel 23:39) [HENDERSON].

**holy flesh** — (<sup><3102></sup>Haggai 2:12-14 <sup><3115></sup>Titus 1:15), namely, the sacrifices, which, through the guilt of the Jews, were no longer *holy*, that is, acceptable to God. The sacrifices on which they relied will, therefore, no longer protect them. Judah is represented as a priest’s wife, who, by adultery, has forfeited her share in the flesh of the sacrifices, and yet boasts of her prerogative at the very same time [HORSLEY].

**when thou doest evil** — literally, “when thy evil” (is at hand). PISCATOR translates, “When thy *calamity* is at hand (according to God’s threats), thou gloriest” (against God, instead of humbling thyself). *English Version* is best (compare <sup><3124></sup>Proverbs 2:14).

**16. called thy name** — made thee.

**olive** — (<sup><3138></sup>Psalms 52:8 <sup><3117></sup>Romans 11:17). The “olive” is chosen to represent the adoption of Judah by the *free grace* of God, as its *oil* is the image of *richness* (compare <sup><3216></sup>Psalms 23:5 104:15).

**with ... noise of ... tumult** — or, “at the noise,” etc. namely, at the tumult of the invading army (<sup><2334></sup>Isaiah 13:4) [MAURER]. Or, rather, “with the sound of a mighty voice,” namely, that of God, that is, the thunder; thus there is no confusion of metaphors. The tree stricken with lightning has “*fire kindled* upon it, and the branches are *broken*,” at one and the same time [HOUBIGANT].

**17. that planted thee** — (<sup><3121></sup>Jeremiah 2:21 <sup><3102></sup>Isaiah 5:2).

**against themselves** — The sinner’s sin is to his own hurt (see on <sup><3179></sup>Jeremiah 7:19).

**18, 19.** Jeremiah here digresses to notice the attempt on his life plotted by his townsmen of Anathoth. He had no suspicion of it, until Jehovah revealed it to him (<sup><3126></sup>Jeremiah 12:6).

**the Lord ... thou** — The change of person from the third to the second accords with the excited feelings of the prophet.

**then** — when I was in peril of my life.

**their doings** — those of the men of Anathoth. His thus alluding to them, before he has mentioned their name, is due to his excitement.



**19. *lamb*** — literally, a “pet lamb,” such as the Jews often had in their houses, for their children to play with; and the Arabs still have (<sup><1118></sup>2 Samuel 12:3). His own *familiar* friends had plotted against the prophet. The language is exactly the same as that applied to Messiah (<sup><2511></sup>Isaiah 53:7). Each prophet and patriarch exemplified in his own person some one feature or more in the manifold attributes and sufferings of the Messiah to come; just as the saints have done since His coming (<sup><4121></sup>Galatians 2:20 <sup><1080></sup>Philippians 3:10 <sup><5024></sup>Colossians 1:24). This adapted both the more experimentally to testify of Christ.

***devices*** — (<sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 18:18).

***tree with ... fruit*** — literally, “in its fruit” or “food,” that is, when it is in fruit. Proverbial, to express the destruction of cause and effect together. The man is the tree; his teaching, the fruit. Let us destroy the prophet and his prophecies; namely, those threatening destruction to the nation, which offended them. Compare <sup><4117></sup>Matthew 7:17, which also refers to *prophets* and their *doctrines*.

**20. *triest ... heart*** — (<sup><6123></sup>Revelation 2:23).

***revealed*** — committed *my cause*. Jeremiah’s wish for vengeance was not personal but ministerial, and accorded with God’s purpose revealed to him against the enemies alike of God and of His servant (<sup><1574></sup>Psalms 37:34 54:7 112:8 118:7).

**21. *Prophecy not*** — (<sup><2307></sup>Isaiah 30:10 <sup><3112></sup>Amos 2:12 <sup><3116></sup>Micah 2:6). If Jeremiah had not uttered his denunciatory predictions, they would not have plotted against him. None were more bitter than his own fellow townsmen. Compare the conduct of the Nazarites towards Jesus of Nazareth (<sup><1108></sup>Luke 4:24-29).

**22.** The retribution of their intended murder shall be in kind; just as in Messiah’s case (<sup><1908></sup>Psalms 69:8-28).

**23.** (<sup><2312></sup>Jeremiah 23:12).

***the year of ... visitation*** — The *Septuagint* translates, “in the year of their,” etc., that is, at the time when I shall visit them in wrath. JEROME supports *English Version*. “Year” often means *a determined time*.

# CHAPTER 12

## <212> JEREMIAH 12:1-17.

### CONTINUATION OF THE SUBJECT AT THE CLOSE OF THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

He ventures to expostulate with Jehovah as to the prosperity of the wicked, who had plotted against his life (<210>Jeremiah 12:1-4); in reply he is told that he will have worse to endure, and that from his own relatives (<210>Jeremiah 12:5,6). The heaviest judgments, however, would be inflicted on the faithless people (<212>Jeremiah 12:7-13); and then on the nations co-operating with the Chaldeans against Judah, with, however, a promise of mercy on repentance (<2124>Jeremiah 12:14-17).

1. (<2504>Psalm 51:4).

*let me talk*, etc. — only let me reason the case with Thee: inquire of Thee the causes why such wicked men as these plotters against my life prosper (compare <2106>Job 12:6 21:7 <2950>Psalm 37:1,35 73:3 <2105>Malachi 3:15). It is right, when hard thoughts of God's providence suggest themselves, to fortify our minds by *justifying God beforehand* (as did Jeremiah), even before we hear the *reasons* of His dealings.

2. *grow* — literally “go on,” “progress.” Thou givest them sure dwellings and increasing prosperity.

*near in ... mouth ... far from ... reins* — (<2093>Isaiah 29:13 <2158>Matthew 15:8). Hypocrites.

3. *knowest me* — (<2901>Psalm 139:1).

*tried ... heart* — (<2113>Jeremiah 11:20).

*toward thee* — rather, “with Thee,” that is, entirely devoted to Thee; contrasted with the hypocrites (<2112>Jeremiah 12:2), “near in ... mouth, and far from ... reins.” This being so, how is it that I fare so ill, they so well?

*pull ... out* — containing the metaphor, from a “rooted tree” (<2112>Jeremiah 12:2).

*prepare* — literally, “separate,” or “set apart as devoted.”

*day of slaughter* — (<sup>3985</sup>James 5:5).

4. *land mourn* — personification (<sup>3442</sup>Jeremiah 14:2 23:10).

*for the wickedness* — (<sup>3978</sup>Psalms 107:34).

*beasts* — (<sup>3008</sup>Hosea 4:3).

*He shall not see our last end* — *Jehovah* knows not what is about to happen to us (<sup>3452</sup>Jeremiah 5:12) [ROSENMULLER]. So the *Septuagint*. (<sup>3901</sup>Psalms 10:11 <sup>3682</sup>Ezekiel 8:12 9:9). Rather, “*The prophet* (Jeremiah, to whom the whole context refers) shall not see our last end.” We need not trouble ourselves about his boding predictions. We shall not be destroyed as he says (<sup>3452</sup>Jeremiah 5:12,13).

5. *Jehovah’s reply to Jeremiah’s complaint.*

*horses* — that is, horsemen: the argument *a fortiori*. A proverbial phrase. The injuries done thee by the men of Anathoth (“the footmen”) are small compared with those which the men of Jerusalem (“the horsemen”) are about to inflict on thee. If the former weary thee out, how wilt thou contend with the king, the court, and the priests at Jerusalem?

*wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee* — *English Version* thus fills up the sentence with the italicized words, to answer to the parallel clause in the first sentence of the verse. The parallelism is, however, sufficiently retained with a less ellipsis: “If (it is only) in a land of peace thou art confident” [MAURER].

*swelling of Jordan* — In harvest-time and earlier (April and May) it overflows its banks (<sup>1065</sup>Joshua 3:15), and fills the valley called the Ghor. Or, “the *pride* of Jordan,” namely, its wooded banks abounding in lions and other wild beasts (<sup>2499</sup>Jeremiah 49:19 50:44 <sup>3818</sup>Zechariah 11:3; compare <sup>1282</sup>2 Kings 6:2). MAUNDRELL says that between the Sea of Tiberias and Lake Merom the banks are so wooded that the traveler cannot see the river at all without first passing through the woods. If in the campaign country (alone) thou art secure, how wilt thou do when thou fallest into the wooded haunts of wild beasts?

6. *even thy brethren* — as in Christ’s case (<sup>4598</sup>Psalms 69:8 <sup>4611</sup>John 1:11 7:5; compare <sup>2198</sup>Jeremiah 9:4 11:19,21 <sup>4008</sup>Matthew 10:36). Godly faithfulness is sure to provoke the ungodly, even of one’s own family.

*called a multitude after thee* — (<sup>2304</sup>Isaiah 31:4). JEROME translates, “cry after thee with a loud (literally, ‘full’) voice.”

*believe ... not ... though ... speak fair* — (<sup>4025</sup>Proverbs 26:25).

**7. *I have forsaken*** — Jehovah will forsake His temple and the people peculiarly His. The mention of God's close tie to them, as heretofore *His*, aggravates their ingratitude, and shows that their past spiritual privileges will not prevent God from punishing them.

***beloved of my soul*** — image from a *wife* (<sup>34115</sup>Jeremiah 11:15 <sup>2846</sup>Isaiah 54:5).

**8. *is unto me*** — is become unto Me: behaves towards Me as a lion which roars against a man, so that he withdraws from the place where he hears it: so I withdrew from My people, once beloved, but now an object of abhorrence because of their rebellious cries against Me.

**9. *speckled bird*** — Many translate, “a ravenous beast, the hyena”; the corresponding *Arabic* word means *hyena*; so the *Septuagint*. But the *Hebrew* always elsewhere means “a bird of prey.” The *Hebrew* for “speckled” is from a root “to color”; answering to the Jewish *blending together* with paganism the altogether *diverse* Mosaic ritual. The neighboring nations, *birds of prey* like herself (for she had sinfully assimilated herself to them), were ready to pounce upon her.

***assemble ... beasts of ... field*** — The Chaldeans are told to gather the surrounding heathen peoples as allies against Judah (<sup>2809</sup>Isaiah 56:9 <sup>3346</sup>Ezekiel 34:5).

**10. *pastors*** — the Babylonian leaders (compare <sup>34212</sup>Jeremiah 12:12 <sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 6:3).

***my vineyard*** — (<sup>2100</sup>Isaiah 5:1,5).

***trodden my portion*** — (<sup>2358</sup>Isaiah 63:18).

**11. *mourneth unto me*** — that is, before Me. EICHORN translates, “by reason of Me,” because I have given it to desolation (<sup>3417</sup>Jeremiah 12:7).

***because no man layeth it to heart*** — because none by repentance and prayer seek to deprecate God's wrath. Or, “yet none lays it to heart”; as in <sup>3418</sup>Jeremiah 5:3 [CALVIN].

**12. *high places*** — Before, He had threatened the plains; now, the hills.

***wilderness*** — not an uninhabited desert, but high lands of pasturage, lying between Judea and Chaldea (<sup>3411</sup>Jeremiah 4:11).

**13.** Description in detail of the devastation of the land (<sup>3365</sup>Micah 6:15).

***they shall be ashamed of your*** — The change of persons, in passing from indirect to direct address, is frequent in the prophets. Equivalent to, “Ye

shall be put to the shame of disappointment at the smallness of your produce.”

**14-17.** Prophecy as to the surrounding nations, the Syrians, Ammonites, etc., who helped forward Judah’s calamity: they shall share her fall; and, on their conversion, they shall share with her in the future restoration. This is a brief anticipation of the predictions in the forty-seventh, forty-eighth, and forty-ninth chapters.

**touch** — (<sup><3018></sup>Zechariah 2:8).

**pluck them out ... pluck out ... Judah** — (Compare end of <sup><31216></sup>Jeremiah 12:16). During the thirteen years that the Babylonians besieged Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar, after subduing Coelo-Syria, brought Ammon, Moab, etc., and finally Egypt, into subjection [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 10:9.7]. On the restoration of these nations, they were to exchange places with the Jews. The latter were now in the midst of them, but on their restoration *they* were to be “in the midst of the Jews,” that is, as proselytes to the true God (compare <sup><3107></sup>Micah 5:7 <sup><33416></sup>Zechariah 14:16). “Pluck *them*,” namely, the Gentile nations: in a bad sense. “Pluck Judah”: in a good sense; used to express the force which was needed to snatch Judah from the tyranny of those nations by whom they had been made captives, or to whom they had fled; otherwise they never would have let Judah go. Previously he had been forbidden to pray for the mass of the Jewish people. But here he speaks consolation to the elect remnant among them. Whatever the Jews might be, God keeps *His* covenant.

**15.** A promise, applying to Judah, as well as to the nations specified (<sup><31044></sup>Amos 9:14). As to Moab, compare <sup><34873></sup>Jeremiah 48:47; as to Ammon, <sup><34816></sup>Jeremiah 49:6.

**16. swear by my name** — (<sup><31002></sup>Jeremiah 4:2 <sup><33985></sup>Isaiah 19:18 65:16); that is, confess solemnly the true God.

**built** — be made spiritually and temporally prosperous: fixed in sure habitations (compare <sup><32016></sup>Jeremiah 24:6 42:10 45:4 <sup><35704></sup>Psalms 87:4,5 <sup><41029></sup>Ephesians 2:20,21 <sup><61051></sup>1 Peter 2:5).

**17.** (<sup><31012></sup>Isaiah 60:12).

# CHAPTER 13

## ~~2417D~~ JEREMIAH 13:1-27.

### SYMBOLICAL PROPHECY (~~2418E~~ JEREMIAH 13:1-7).

Many of these figurative acts being either not possible, or not probable, or decorous, seem to have existed only in the mind of the prophet as part of his inward vision. [So CALVIN]. The world he moved in was not the sensible, but the spiritual, world. Inward acts were, however, when it was possible and proper, materialized by outward performance but not always, and necessarily so. The internal act made a naked statement more impressive and presented the subject when extending over long portions of space and time more concentrated. The interruption of Jeremiah's official duty by a journey of more than two hundred miles twice is not likely to have *literally* taken place.

1. *put it upon thy loins*, etc. — expressing the close intimacy wherewith Jehovah had joined Israel and Judah to Him (~~2419E~~ Jeremiah 13:11).

*linen* — implying it was the inner garment next the skin, not the outer one.

*put it not in water* — signifying the moral filth of His people, like the literal filth of a garment worn constantly next the skin, without being washed (~~2420E~~ Jeremiah 13:10). GROTIUS understands a garment not bleached, but left in its native roughness, just as Judah had no beauty, but was adopted by the sole grace of God (~~2421E~~ Ezekiel 16:4-6). “Neither wast thou washed in water,” etc.

4. *Euphrates* — In order to support the view that Jeremiah's act was outward, HENDERSON considers that the *Hebrew Phrath* here is *Ephratha*, the original name of Beth-lehem, six miles south of Jerusalem, a journey easy to be made by Jeremiah. The non-addition of the word “river,” which usually precedes *Phrath*, when meaning Euphrates, favors this view. But I prefer *English Version*. The Euphrates is specified as being near Babylon, the Jews future place of exile.

*hole* — typical of the prisons in which the Jews were to be confined.

*the rock* — some well-known rock. A sterile region, such as was that to which the Jews were led away (compare ~~2422E~~ Isaiah 7:19) [GROTIUS].

6. *after many days* — Time enough was given for the girdle to become unfit for use. So, in course of time, the Jews became corrupted by the heathen idolatries around, so as to cease to be witnesses of Jehovah; they must, therefore, be cast away as a “marred” or spoiled girdle.

9. (<sup><1339></sup>Leviticus 26:19).

10. *imagination* — rather, “obstinacy.”

11. (<sup><2319></sup>Jeremiah 33:9 <sup><12416></sup>Exodus 19:5).

*glory* — an ornament to glory in.

12. A new image.

*Do we not ... know ... wine* — The “bottles” are those used in the East, made of skins; our word “hogshead,” originally “oxhide,” alludes to the same custom. As they were used to hold water, milk, and other liquids, what the prophet said (namely, that they should be all filled with wine) was not, as the Jews’ taunting reply implied, a truism even *literally*. The figurative sense which is what Jeremiah chiefly meant, they affected not to understand. As wine intoxicates, so God’s wrath and judgments shall reduce them to that state of helpless distraction that they shall rush on to their own ruin (<sup><24515></sup>Jeremiah 25:15 49:12 <sup><25117></sup>Isaiah 51:17,21,22 63:6).

13. *upon David’s throne* — literally, who sit *for David on his throne*; implying the succession of the Davidic family (<sup><3214></sup>Jeremiah 22:4).

*all* — indiscriminately of every rank.

14. *dash* — (<sup><1119></sup>Psalm 2:9). As a potter’s vessel (<sup><1127></sup>Revelation 2:27).

15. *be not proud* — Pride was the cause of their contumacy, as humility is the first step to obedience (<sup><2137></sup>Jeremiah 13:17 <sup><1910></sup>Psalm 10:4).

16. *Give glory*, etc. — Show by repentance and obedience to God, that you revere His majesty. So Joshua exhorted Achan to “give glory to God” by confessing his crime, thereby showing he revered the All-knowing God.

*stumble* — image from travelers stumbling into a fatal abyss when overtaken by nightfall (<sup><2313></sup>Isaiah 5:30 59:9,10 <sup><108></sup>Amos 8:9).

*dark mountains* — literally, “mountains of twilight” or “gloom,” which cast such a gloomy shadow that the traveler stumbles against an opposing rock before he sees it (<sup><3110></sup>John 11:10 12:35).

*shadow of death* — the densest gloom; death shade (<sup><1449></sup>Psalm 44:19). *Light* and *darkness* are images of prosperity and adversity.

**17. *hear it*** — my exhortation.

***in secret*** — as one mourning and humbling himself for their sin, not self-righteously condemning them (<sup><318></sup>Philippians 3:18).

***pride*** — (see on <sup><2415></sup>Jeremiah 13:15; <sup><1837></sup>Job 33:17).

***flock*** — (<sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 13:20), just as kings and leaders are called pastors.

**18. *king*** — Jehoiachin or Jeconiah.

***queen*** — the queen mother who, as the king was not more than eighteen years old, held the chief power. Nehushta, daughter of Elnathan, carried away captive with Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><1248></sup>2 Kings 24:8-15).

***Humble yourselves*** — that is, Ye shall be humbled, or brought low (<sup><2228></sup>Jeremiah 22:26 28:2).

***your principalities*** — rather, “your *head ornament*.”

**19. *cities of the south*** — namely, south of Judea; farthest off from the enemy, who advanced from the north.

***shut up*** — that is, deserted (<sup><2340></sup>Isaiah 24:10); so that none shall be left to open the gates to travelers and merchants again [HENDERSON]. Rather, *shut up so* closely by Nebuchadnezzar’s forces, sent on before (<sup><1240></sup>2 Kings 24:10,11), that none shall be allowed by the enemy to get out (compare <sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 13:20).

***wholly*** — literally, “fully”; completely.

**20. *from ... north*** — Nebuchadnezzar and his hostile army (<sup><2414></sup>Jeremiah 1:14 6:22).

***flock ... given thee*** — Jeremiah, amazed at the depopulation caused by Nebuchadnezzar’s forces, addresses Jerusalem (a *noun of multitude*, which accounts for the blending of *plural* and *singular*, *Your eyes ... thee ... thy flock*), and asks where is the population (<sup><2437></sup>Jeremiah 13:17, “flock”) which God had given her?

**21. *captains, and as chief*** — literally, “princes as to headship”; or “over thy head,” namely, the Chaldeans. Rather, translate, “What wilt thou say when God will set them (the enemies, <sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 13:20) above thee, seeing that thou thyself hast accustomed them (to be) with thee as (thy) *lovers in the highest place* (literally, ‘at thy head’)? Thou canst not say God does thee wrong, seeing it was thou that gave occasion to His dealing so with thee, by so eagerly courting their intimacy.” Compare <sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 2:18,36 <sup><1239></sup>2 Kings 23:29, as to the league of Judah with Babylon, which



led Josiah to march against Pharaoh-necho, when the latter was about to attack Babylon [MAURER].

**sorrows** — pains, throes.

**22. *if thou say*** — connecting this verse with “What wilt thou say” (<sup>24133</sup>Jeremiah 13:21)?

***skirts discovered*** — that is, are thrown up so as to expose the person (<sup>24133</sup>Jeremiah 13:26 <sup>24187</sup>Isaiah 3:17 Na 3:5).

***heels made bare*** — The sandal was fastened by a thong above the heel to the instep. The *Hebrew*, is, “are violently handled,” or “torn off”; that is, thou art exposed to ignominy. Image from an adulteress.

**23. *Ethiopian*** — the Cushite of Abyssinia. Habit is second nature; as therefore it is morally impossible that the Jews can alter their inveterate habits of sin, nothing remains but the infliction of the extremest punishment, their expatriation (<sup>24133</sup>Jeremiah 13:24).

24. (<sup>25004</sup>Psalms 1:4).

***by the wind*** — *before* the wind.

***of the wilderness*** — where the wind has full sweep, not being broken by any obstacle.

**25. *portion of thy measures*** — the portion which I have measured out to thee (<sup>24119</sup>Job 20:29 <sup>25006</sup>Psalms 11:6).

***falsehood*** — (<sup>24137</sup>Jeremiah 13:27), false gods and alliances with foreign idolaters.

**26. *discover ... upon thy face*** — rather, “throw up thy skirts over thy face,” or head; done by way of ignominy to captive women and to prostitutes (Na 3:5). The Jews’ punishment should answer to their crime. As their sin had been perpetrated in the most public places, so God would expose them to the contempt of other nations most openly (<sup>25008</sup>Lamentations 1:8).

**27. *neighings*** — (<sup>24118</sup>Jeremiah 5:8), image from the lust of horses; the lust after idols degrades to the level of the brute.

***hills*** — where, as being nearer heaven, sacrifices were thought most acceptable to the gods.

***wilt thou not ... ? when*** — literally, “*thou wilt not be made clean after how long a time yet.*” (So <sup>24133</sup>Jeremiah 13:23). Jeremiah *denies* the moral

possibility of one so long hardened in sin becoming *soon* cleansed. But see ~~Jeremiah~~ Jeremiah 32:17 ~~Luke~~ Luke 18:27.

# CHAPTER 14

## ~~(244)~~ JEREMIAH 14:1-22.

### PROPHECIES ON THE OCCASION OF A DROUGHT SENT IN JUDGMENT ON JUDEA.

1. Literally, “That which was the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah concerning the dearth”

**drought** — literally, the “withholdings,” namely, of rain (~~(451)~~ Deuteronomy 11:17 ~~(447)~~ 2 Chronicles 7:13). This word should be used especially of the withholding of rain because rain is in those regions of all things the one chiefly needed (~~(247)~~ Jeremiah 17:8, *Margin*).

2. **gates** — *The place of public concourse* in each city looks sad, as being no longer frequented (~~(238)~~ Isaiah 3:26 24:4).

**black** — that is, they mourn (blackness being indicative of sorrow), (~~(242)~~ Jeremiah 8:21).

**unto the ground** — bowing towards it.

**cry** — of distress (~~(465)~~ 1 Samuel 5:12 ~~(234)~~ Isaiah 24:11).

3. **little ones** — rather, “their inferiors,” that is, domestics.

**pits** — cisterns for collecting rain water, often met with in the *East* where there are no springs.

**covered ... heads** — (~~(453)~~ 2 Samuel 15:30). A sign of humiliation and mourning.

5. The brute creation is reduced to the utmost extremity for the want of food. The “hind,” famed for her affection to her young, abandons them.

6. **wild asses** — They repair to “the high places” most exposed to the winds, which they “snuff in” to relieve their thirst.

**dragons** — jackals [HENDERSON].

**eyes** — which are usually most keen in detecting grass or water from the “heights,” so much so that the traveler guesses from their presence that there must be herbage and water near; but now “their eyes fail.” Rather the

reference is to the great boas and python serpents which raise a large portion of their body up in a vertical column ten or twelve feet high, to survey the neighborhood above the surrounding bushes, while with open jaws they drink in the air. These giant serpents originated the widely spread notions which typified the deluge and all destructive agents under the form of a dragon or monster serpent; hence, the dragon temples always near water, in Asia, Africa, and Britain; for example, at Abury, in Wiltshire; a symbol of the ark is often associated with the dragon as the preserver from the waters [KITTO, *Biblical Cyclopaedia*].

**7. *do thou it*** — what we beg of Thee; interpose to remove the drought. Jeremiah pleads in the name of his nation (<sup><1949></sup>Psalm 109:21). So “work for us,” absolutely used (<sup><1941></sup>1 Samuel 14:6).

***for thy name’s sake*** — “for *our* backslidings are so many” that we cannot urge Thee for the sake of *our* doings, but for the glory of *Thy* name; lest, if Thou give us not aid, it should be said it was owing to Thy want of power (<sup><1809></sup>Joshua 7:9 <sup><1949></sup>Psalm 79:9 106:8 <sup><2349></sup>Isaiah 48:9 <sup><3104></sup>Ezekiel 20:44). The same appeal to God’s mercy, “for *His* name’s sake,” as our only hope, since *our* sin precludes trust in ourselves, occurs in <sup><1851></sup>Psalm 25:11.

**8.** The reference is, not to the faith of *Israel* which had almost ceased, but to the promise and everlasting covenant of *God*. None but the true Israel make God their “hope.” (<sup><2473></sup>Jeremiah 17:13).

***turneth aside to tarry*** — The *traveler* cares little for the land he tarries but a night in; but Thou hast promised to  *dwell* always in the midst of Thy people (<sup><4812></sup>2 Chronicles 33:7,8). MAURER translates, “spreadeth,” namely, his tent.

**9. *astonied*** — like a “mighty man,” at other times able to help (<sup><2801></sup>Isaiah 59:1). but now *stunned* by a sudden calamity so as to disappoint the hopes drawn from him.

***art in the midst of us*** — (<sup><1295></sup>Exodus 29:45,46 <sup><1831></sup>Leviticus 26:11,12).

***called by thy name*** — (<sup><2708></sup>Daniel 9:18,19) as Thine own peculiar people (<sup><1819></sup>Deuteronomy 9:29).

**10.** Jehovah’s reply to the prayer (<sup><2447></sup>Jeremiah 14:7-9 <sup><2123></sup>Jeremiah 2:23-25).

***Thus*** — *So greatly*.

***loved*** — (<sup><2163></sup>Jeremiah 5:31).

***not refrained ... feet*** — They did not obey God’s command; “withhold thy foot” (<sup><2425></sup>Jeremiah 2:25), namely, from following after idols.

**remember ... iniquity** — (<sup><383></sup>Hosea 8:13 9:9). Their sin is so great, God must punish them.

11. (<sup><2176></sup>Jeremiah 7:16 <sup><1220></sup>Exodus 32:10).

12. **not hear** — because their prayers are hypocritical: their hearts are still idolatrous. God never refuses to hear *real* prayer (<sup><2172></sup>Jeremiah 7:21,22 <sup><1028></sup>Proverbs 1:28 <sup><2115></sup>Isaiah 1:15 58:3).

**sword ... famine ... pestilence** — the three sorest judgments at once; any one of which would be enough for their ruin (<sup><1242></sup>2 Samuel 24:12,13).

13. Jeremiah urges that much of the guilt of the people is due to the false prophets' influence.

**assured peace** — solid and lasting peace. Literally, “peace of truth” (<sup><2308></sup>Isaiah 39:8).

14. (<sup><2321></sup>Jeremiah 23:21).

15. (<sup><2152></sup>Jeremiah 5:12,13).

**By sword and famine ... consumed** — retribution in kind both to the false prophets and to their hearers (<sup><2446></sup>Jeremiah 14:16).

16. **none to bury** — (<sup><1748></sup>Psalms 79:3).

**pour their wickedness** — that is, the punishment incurred by their wickedness (<sup><2129></sup>Jeremiah 2:19).

17. (<sup><2101></sup>Jeremiah 9:1 <sup><2116></sup>Lamentations 1:16). Jeremiah is desired to weep ceaselessly for the calamities coming on his nation (called a “virgin,” as being heretofore never under foreign yoke), (<sup><2204></sup>Isaiah 23:4).

18. **go about** — that is, shall have to migrate into a land of exile. HORSLEY translates, “go *trafficking* about the land (see <sup><2451></sup>Jeremiah 5:31, *Margin*; <sup><4042></sup>2 Corinthians 4:2 <sup><6012></sup>2 Peter 2:3), and take no knowledge” (that is, pay no regard to the miseries before their eyes) (<sup><2108></sup>Isaiah 1:3 58:3). If the sense of the *Hebrew* verb be retained, I would with *English Version* understand the words as referring to the exile to Babylon; thus, “the prophet and the priest shall have to go to a strange land to *practice their religious traffic*” (<sup><2861></sup>Isaiah 56:11 <sup><3642></sup>Ezekiel 34:2,3 <sup><3111></sup>Micah 3:11).

19. The people plead with God, Jeremiah being forbidden to do so.

**no healing** — (<sup><24518></sup>Jeremiah 15:18).

**peace ... no good** — (<sup><2485></sup>Jeremiah 8:15).

20. (<sup>2008</sup>Daniel 9:8).

21. *us* — “the throne of Thy glory” may be the object of “abhor not” (“reject not”); or “Zion” (<sup>2449</sup>Jeremiah 14:19).

*throne of thy glory* — Jerusalem, or, *the temple*, called God’s “footstool” and “habitation” (<sup>1330</sup>1 Chronicles 28:2 <sup>1406</sup>Psalm 132:5).

*thy covenant* — (<sup>1966</sup>Psalm 106:45 <sup>2099</sup>Daniel 9:19).

22. *vanities* — idols (<sup>0521</sup>Deuteronomy 32:21).

*rain* — (<sup>3807</sup>Zechariah 10:1,2).

*heavens* — namely, of themselves without God (<sup>1055</sup>Matthew 5:45 <sup>4447</sup>Acts 14:17); they are not the First Cause, and ought not to be deified, as they were by the heathen. The disjunctive “or” favors CALVIN’S explanation: “Not even the heavens themselves can give rain, much less can the idol vanities.”

*art not thou he* — namely, who canst give rain?

# CHAPTER 15

## JEREMIAH 15:1-21.

### GOD'S REPLY TO JEREMIAH'S INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

1. **Moses ... Samuel** — eminent in intercessions (<sup><1231></sup>Exodus 32:11,12 <sup><1070></sup>1 Samuel 7:9 <sup><1006></sup>Psalms 99:6).

**be toward** — could not be favorably inclined toward them.

**out of my sight** — God speaks as if the people were present before Him, along with Jeremiah.

2. **death** — deadly plague (<sup><1182></sup>Jeremiah 18:21 43:11 <sup><1181></sup>Ezekiel 5:2,12 <sup><1117></sup>Zechariah 11:9).

3. **appoint** — (<sup><1230></sup>Leviticus 26:16).

**kinds** — of punishments.

4. **cause ... to be removed** — (<sup><1225></sup>Deuteronomy 28:25 <sup><1234></sup>Ezekiel 23:46). Rather, “I will give them up to vexation,” I will cause them to wander so as nowhere to have repose [CALVIN]; (<sup><1238></sup>2 Chronicles 29:8, “trouble;” Margin, “commotion”).

**because of Manasseh** — He was now dead, but the effects of his sins still remained. How much evil one bad man can cause! The evil fruits remain even after he himself has received repentance and forgiveness. The people had followed his wicked example ever since; and it is implied that it was only through the long-suffering of God that the penal consequences had been suspended up to the present time (compare <sup><1146></sup>1 Kings 14:16 <sup><1211></sup>2 Kings 21:11,23:26 24:3,4).

5. **go aside ... how thou doest** — Who will turn aside (in passing by) to salute thee (to wish thee “peace”)?

6. **weary with repenting** — (<sup><1234></sup>Hosea 13:14 11:8). I have so often *repented* of the evil that I threatened (<sup><1269></sup>Jeremiah 26:19 <sup><1234></sup>Exodus 32:14 <sup><1215></sup>1 Chronicles 21:15), and have spared them, without My forbearance moving them to repentance, that I will not again change My purpose (God speaking in condescension to human modes of thought), but will take vengeance on them now.

**7. fan** — tribulation — from *tribulum*, a threshing instrument, which separates the chaff from the wheat (<sup><4182></sup>Matthew 3:12).

**gates of the land** — that is, the extreme bounds of the land through which the entrance to and exit from it lie. MAURER translates, “I will fan,” that is, cast them forth “to the gates of the land” (Na 3:13). “In the gates”; *English Version* draws the image from a man cleaning corn with a fan; he stands at the gate of the threshing-floor in the open air, to remove the wheat from the chaff by means of the wind; so God threatens to remove Israel out of the bounds of the land [HOUBIGANT].

**8. Their widows** — My people’s (<sup><2457></sup>Jeremiah 15:7).

**have brought** — prophetic past: I will bring.

**mother of the young men** — “mother” is collective; after the “widows,” He naturally mentions bereavement of their sons (“young men”), brought on the “mothers” by “the spoiler”; it was owing to the number of men slain that the “widows” were so many [CALVIN]. Others take “mother,” as in <sup><1189></sup>2 Samuel 20:19, of Jerusalem, the metropolis; “I have brought on them, against the ‘mother,’ a young spoiler,” namely, Nebuchadnezzar, sent by his father, Nabopolassar, to repulse the Egyptian invaders (<sup><1239></sup>2 Kings 23:29 24:1), and occupy Judea. But <sup><2457></sup>Jeremiah 15:7 shows the future, not the past, is referred to; and “widows” being literal, “mother” is probably so, too.

**at noonday** — the hottest part of the day, when military operations were usually suspended; thus it means *unexpectedly*, answering to the parallel, “suddenly”; *openly*, as others explain it, will not suit the parallelism (compare <sup><1916></sup>Psalms 91:6).

**it** — *English Version* seems to understand by “it” the mother city, and by “him” the “spoiler”; thus “it” will be parallel to “city.” Rather, “I will cause to fall upon *them* (the ‘mothers’ about to be bereft of their sons) suddenly *anguish* and terrors.”

**the city** — rather, from a root “heat,” *anguish*, or consternation. So the *Septuagint*.

**9. borne seven** — (<sup><4015></sup>1 Samuel 2:5). Seven being the perfect number indicates full fruitfulness.

**languisheth** — because not even one is left of all her sons (<sup><2458></sup>Jeremiah 15:8).



**sun is gone down while ... yet day** — Fortune deserts her at the very height of her prosperity (<sup>3009</sup>Amos 8:9).

**she ... ashamed** — The mothers (*she* being collective) are put to the shame of disappointed hopes through the loss of all their children.

**10.** (<sup>2044</sup>Jeremiah 20:14 <sup>4801</sup>Job 3:1, etc.). Jeremiah seems to have been of a peculiarly sensitive temperament; yet the Holy Spirit enabled him to deliver his message at the certain cost of having his sensitiveness wounded by the enmities of those whom his words offended.

**man of strife** — exposed to strifes on the part of “the whole earth” (<sup>4806</sup>Psalms 80:6).

**I have neither lent**, etc. — proverbial for, “I have given no cause for strife against me.”

**11. Verily** — literally, “Shall it not be?” that is, “Surely it shall be.”

**thy remnant** — the *final issue* of thy life; thy life, which now seems to thee so sad, shall eventuate in prosperity [CALVIN]. They who think that they shall be the surviving remnant, whereas thou shalt perish, shall themselves fall, whereas *thou shalt remain* and be favored by the conquerors [JUNIUS], (<sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 40:4,5 39:11,12). The *Keri* reads, “I will *set thee free* (or as MAURER, ‘I will establish thee’) for good” (<sup>2441</sup>Jeremiah 14:11 <sup>4502</sup>Ezra 8:22 <sup>4502</sup>Psalms 119:122).

**to entreat thee well** — literally, “to meet thee”; so “to be placable, nay, of their own accord to *anticipate in meeting* thee with kindness” [CALVIN]. I prefer this translation as according with the event (<sup>2991</sup>Jeremiah 39:11,12 40:4,5). GESENIUS, from <sup>2476</sup>Jeremiah 7:16 27:18 <sup>4215</sup>Job 21:15, translates (not only will I relieve thee from the enemy’s vexations, but) “I will make thine enemy (that now vexeth thee) *apply to thee with prayers*” (<sup>2984</sup>Jeremiah 38:14 42:2-6).

**12. steel** — rather, *brass* or *copper*, which mixed with “iron” (by the Chalybes near the Euxine Pontus, far north of Palestine), formed the hardest metal, like our *steel*. Can *the Jews*, hardy like common iron though they be, break the still hardier *Chaldees* of the north (<sup>2014</sup>Jeremiah 1:14), who resemble the Chalybian iron hardened with copper? Certainly not [CALVIN]. HENDERSON translates. “Can *one* break iron, (even) the northern iron, and brass,” on the ground that *English Version* makes ordinary *iron* not so hard as brass. But it is not brass, but a particular mixture of iron and *brass*, which is represented as harder than *common iron*, which was probably then of inferior texture, owing to ignorance of modern modes of preparation.

**13. *Thy substance ... sins*** — Judea's, not Jeremiah's.

***without price*** — God casts His people away as a thing *worth naught* (<sup><39412></sup>Psalm 44:12). So, on the contrary, Jehovah, when about to restore His people, says, He will give Egypt, etc., for their “ransom” (<sup><2368B></sup>Isaiah 43:3).

***even in all thy borders*** — joined with “Thy substance ... treasures, as also with “all thy sins,” their sin and punishment being commensurate (<sup><347B></sup>Jeremiah 17:3).

**14. *thee*** — MAURER supplies “them,” namely, “thy treasures.” EICHORN, needlessly, from *Syriac* and the *Septuagint*, reads, “I will *make thee to serve* thine enemies”; a reading doubtless interpolated from <sup><3470B></sup>Jeremiah 17:4.

***fire*** — (<sup><4622></sup>Deuteronomy 32:22).

**15. *thou knowest*** — namely, my case; what wrongs my adversaries have done me (<sup><341B></sup>Jeremiah 12:3).

***revenge me*** — (See on <sup><341D></sup>Jeremiah 11:20). The prophet in this had regard to, not his own personal feelings of revenge, but the cause of God; he speaks by inspiration God's will against the ungodly. Contrast in this the law with the gospel (<sup><4234></sup>Luke 23:34 <sup><407B></sup>Acts 7:60).

***take me not away in thy long-suffering*** — By Thy long-suffering towards them, suffer them not meanwhile to take away my life.

***for thy sake I have suffered rebuke*** — the very words of the antitype, Jesus Christ (<sup><3917></sup>Psalm 69:7,22-28), which last compare with Jeremiah's prayer in the beginning of this verse.

**16. *eat*** — (<sup><348B></sup>Ezekiel 2:8 3:1,3 <sup><609></sup>Revelation 10:9,10). As soon as Thy words were found by me, I eagerly laid hold of and appropriated them. The *Keri* reads, “Thy word.”

***thy word ... joy*** — (<sup><3212></sup>Job 23:12 <sup><4972></sup>Psalm 119:72,111; compare <sup><134></sup>Matthew 13:44).

***called by thy name*** — I am Thine, Thy minister. So the antitype, Jesus Christ (<sup><1231></sup>Exodus 23:21).

**17. My “rejoicing”** (<sup><3456></sup>Jeremiah 15:16) was not that of the profane mockers (<sup><3001></sup>Psalm 1:1 26:4,5) at feasts. So far from having fellowship with these, he was expelled from society, and made to sit “alone,” because of his faithful prophecies.

**because of thy hand** — that is, Thine inspiration (<sup>2381</sup>Isaiah 8:11 <sup>3008</sup>Ezekiel 1:3 3:14).

**filled me with indignation** — So <sup>2461</sup>Jeremiah 6:11, “full of the fury of the Lord”; so full was he of the subject (God’s “indignation” against the ungodly) with which God had inspired him, as not to be able to contain himself from expressing it. The same comparison by contrast between the effect of *inspiration*, and that of *wine*, both taking a man out of himself, occurs (<sup>4423</sup>Acts 2:13,15,18).

**18.** (<sup>2805</sup>Jeremiah 30:15). “Pain,” namely, the perpetual persecution to which he was exposed, and his being left by God without consolation and “alone.” Contrast his feeling here with that in <sup>2456</sup>Jeremiah 15:16, when he enjoyed the full presence of God, and was inspired by His words. Therefore he utters words of his natural “infirmity” (so David, <sup>4970</sup>Psalms 77:10) here; as before he spoke under the higher spiritual nature given him.

**as a liar, and as** — rather, “as a *deceiving* (river) ... waters that are not sure (lasting)”; opposed to “tiring (perennial) waters” (<sup>3065</sup>Job 6:15). Streams that the thirsty traveler had calculated on being full in winter, but which disappoint him in his sorest need, having run dry in the heat of summer. Jehovah had promised Jeremiah protection from his enemies (<sup>2008</sup>Jeremiah 1:18,19); his infirmity suggests that God had failed to do so.

**19.** God’s reply to Jeremiah.

**return ... bring ... again** — Jeremiah, by his impatient language, had left his proper posture towards God; God saith, “If thou wilt return (to thy former *patient* discharge of thy prophetic function) I will bring thee back” to thy former position: in the *Hebrew* there is a play of words, “return ... turn again” (<sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 8:4 4:1).

**stand before me** — minister acceptably to Me (<sup>6508</sup>Deuteronomy 10:8 <sup>4170</sup>1 Kings 17:1 18:15).

**take ... precious from ... vile** — image from metals: “If thou wilt separate what is precious *in thee* (the divine graces imparted) from what is vile (thy natural corruptions, impatience, and hasty words), thou shalt be as My mouth”: my mouthpiece (<sup>1046</sup>Exodus 4:16).

**return not thou unto them** — Let not them lead you into their profane ways (as Jeremiah had spoken irreverently, <sup>2458</sup>Jeremiah 15:18), but lead thou them to the ways of godliness (<sup>2456</sup>Jeremiah 15:16,17). <sup>3226</sup>Ezekiel 22:26 accords with the other interpretation, which, however, does not so well suit the context, “If thou wilt separate from the promiscuous mass the better ones, and lead them to conversion by faithful warnings,” etc.

**20, 21.** The promise of <sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 1:18,19, in almost the same words, but with the addition, adapted to the present attacks of Jeremiah's formidable enemies, "I will deliver thee out of ... wicked ... redeem ... terrible"; the repetition is in order to assure Jeremiah that God is *the same now* as when He first made the promise, in opposition to the prophet's irreverent accusation of unfaithfulness (<sup><2458></sup>Jeremiah 15:18).

# CHAPTER 16

## JEREMIAH 16:1-21.

### CONTINUATION OF THE PREVIOUS PROPHECY.

2. *in this place* — in Judea. The direction to remain single was (whether literally obeyed, or only in prophetic vision) to symbolize the coming calamities of the Jews (<sup><3245></sup>Ezekiel 24:15-27) as so severe that the single state would be then (contrary to the ordinary course of things) preferable to the married (compare <sup><4178></sup>1 Corinthians 7:8,26,29 <sup><4149></sup>Matthew 24:19 <sup><4239></sup>Luke 23:29).

4. *grievous deaths* — rather, “deadly diseases” (<sup><2452></sup>Jeremiah 15:2).

*not ... lamented* — so many shall be the slain (<sup><4228></sup>Jeremiah 22:18).

*dung* — (<sup><4830></sup>Psalms 83:10).

5. (<sup><3247></sup>Ezekiel 24:17,22,23).

*house of mourning* — (<sup><4158></sup>Mark 5:38). *Margin*, “mourning-feast”; such feasts were usual at funerals. The *Hebrew* means, in <sup><3167></sup>Amos 6:7, the *cry of joy* at a banquet; here, and <sup><2129></sup>Lamentations 2:19, the *cry of sorrow*.

6. *cut themselves* — indicating extravagant grief (<sup><2445></sup>Jeremiah 41:5 47:5), prohibited by the law (<sup><4828></sup>Leviticus 19:28).

*bald* — (<sup><2172></sup>Jeremiah 7:29 <sup><3212></sup>Isaiah 22:12).

7. *tear themselves* — rather, “break bread,” namely, that eaten at the funeral-feast (<sup><4534></sup>Deuteronomy 26:14 <sup><4821></sup>Job 42:11 <sup><3247></sup>Ezekiel 24:17 <sup><3304></sup>Hosea 9:4). “Bread” is to be supplied, as in <sup><2104></sup>Lamentations 4:4; compare “take” (food) (<sup><1423></sup>Genesis 42:33).

*give ... cup of consolation ... for ... father* — It was the Oriental custom for friends to send viands and wine (the “cup of consolation”) to console relatives in mourning-feasts, for example, to children upon the death of a “father” or “mother.”

8. *house of feasting* — joyous: as distinguished from mourning-feasts. Have no more to do with this people whether in mourning or joyous feasts.

9. (<sup>2473</sup>Jeremiah 7:34 25:10; <sup>2583</sup>Ezekiel 26:13).

10. (<sup>1624</sup>Deuteronomy 29:24 <sup>1008</sup>1 Kings 9:8,9).

11. (<sup>2159</sup>Jeremiah 5:19 13:22 22:8,9).

12. *ye* — emphatic: so far from avoiding your fathers' bad example, ye have done worse (<sup>2476</sup>Jeremiah 7:26 <sup>1149</sup>1 Kings 14:9).

*imagination* — rather, “stubborn perversity.”

*that they may not hearken* — rather, connected with “ye”; “ye have walked ... so as not to hearken to Me.”

13. *serve other gods* — That which was their sin in their own land was their punishment in exile. Retribution in kind. They *voluntarily* forsook God for idols at home; they were *not allowed* to serve God, if they wished it, in captivity (<sup>2782</sup>Daniel 3:12 6:7).

*day and night* — irony. You may there serve idols, which ye are so mad after, even to satiety, and without intermission.

14. *Therefore* — So severe shall be the Jews' bondage that their deliverance from it shall be a greater benefit than that out of Egypt. The consolation is incidental here; the prominent thought is the *severity* of their punishment, so great that their rescue from it will be greater than that from Egypt [CALVIN]; so the context, <sup>2463</sup>Jeremiah 16:13,17,18, proves (<sup>2237</sup>Jeremiah 23:7,8 <sup>2688</sup>Isaiah 43:18).

15. *the north* — Chaldea. But while the return from Babylon is primarily meant, the return hereafter is the full and final accomplishment contemplated, as “from *all* the lands” proves. “*Israel*” was not, save in a very limited sense, “gathered from all the lands” at the return from Babylon (see on <sup>2216</sup>Jeremiah 24:6; <sup>2818</sup>Jeremiah 30:3; <sup>2695</sup>Jeremiah 32:15).

16. *send for* — translate, “I will send many”; “I will give the commission to many” (<sup>4472</sup>2 Chronicles 17:7).

*fishers ... hunters* — successive invaders of Judea (<sup>3002</sup>Amos 4:2 <sup>3014</sup>Habakkuk 1:14,15). So “net” (<sup>2223</sup>Ezekiel 12:13). As to “hunters,” see <sup>1109</sup>Genesis 10:9 <sup>3107</sup>Micah 7:2. The Chaldees were famous in hunting, as the Egyptians, the other enemy of Judea, were in fishing. “Fishers” expresses the *ease* of their victory over the Jews as that of the angler over fishes; “hunters,” the keenness of their pursuit of them into every cave and nook. It is remarkable, the same image is used in a good sense of the Jews' restoration, implying that just as their enemies were employed by God to take them in hand for destruction, so the same shall be employed for their

restoration (<sup>2670</sup>Ezekiel 47:9,10). So spiritually, those once enemies by nature (*fishermen* many of them literally) were employed by God to be heralds of salvation, “catching men” for life (<sup>4109</sup>Matthew 4:19 <sup>4250</sup>Luke 5:10 <sup>4421</sup>Acts 2:41 4:4); compare here <sup>2469</sup>Jeremiah 16:19, “the Gentiles shall come unto thee” (<sup>4726</sup>2 Corinthians 12:16).

17. (<sup>2629</sup>Jeremiah 32:19 <sup>2152</sup>Proverbs 5:21 15:3).

*their iniquity* — the cause of God’s judgments on them.

18. *first ... double* — HORSLEY translates, “I will recompense ... *once and again*”; literally, “the first time repeated”: alluding to the two captivities — the Babylonian and the Roman. MAURER, “I will recompense their *former* iniquities (those *long ago* committed by their fathers) and their (own) *repeated* sins” (<sup>2461</sup>Jeremiah 16:11,12). *English Version* gives a good sense, “*First* (before ‘I bring them again into their land’), I will doubly (that is, *fully and amply*, <sup>2478</sup>Jeremiah 17:18 <sup>2302</sup>Isaiah 40:2) recompense.”

*carcasses* — not sweet-smelling *sacrifices* acceptable to God, but “carcasses” offered to idols, an offensive odor to God: human victims (<sup>2498</sup>Jeremiah 19:5 <sup>2361</sup>Ezekiel 16:20), and unclean animals (<sup>2384</sup>Isaiah 65:4 66:17). MAURER explains it, “the carcasses” *of the idols*: their images void of sense and life, Compare <sup>2469</sup>Jeremiah 16:19,20. <sup>4331</sup>Leviticus 26:30 favors this.

19, 20. The result of God’s judgments on the Jews will be that both the Jews when restored, and the Gentiles who have witnessed those judgments, shall renounce idolatry for the worship of Jehovah. Fulfilled partly at the return from Babylon, after which the Jews entirely renounced idols, and many proselytes were gathered in from the Gentiles, but not to be realized in its fullness till the final restoration of Israel (<sup>2300</sup>Isaiah 2:1-17).

20. indignant protest of Jeremiah against idols.

*and they (are) no gods* — (<sup>2421</sup>Jeremiah 2:11 <sup>2379</sup>Isaiah 37:19 <sup>4808</sup>Galatians 4:8). “They” refers to the idols. A *man* (a creature himself) making *God* is a contradiction in terms. *Vulgate* takes “they” thus: “Shall man make gods, though *men* themselves are not gods?”

21. *Therefore* — In order that all may be turned from idols to Jehovah, He will now give awful proof of His divine power in the judgments He will inflict.

*this once* — If the punishments I have heretofore inflicted *have* not been severe enough to teach them.

*my name ... Lord* — *Jehovah* (<sup><1818></sup>Psalm 83:18): God's incommunicable name, to apply which to idols would be blasphemy. Keeping His threats and promises (<sup><1118></sup>Exodus 6:3).



# CHAPTER 17

## JEREMIAH 17:1-27.

### THE JEWS' INVETERATE LOVE OF IDOLATRY.

The the *Septuagint* omits the first four verses, but other *Greek* versions have them.

1. The first of the four clauses relates to the third, the second to the fourth, by alternate parallelism. The sense is: They are as keen after idols as if their propensity was “graven with an iron pen (<sup><389D4></sup>Job 19:24) on their hearts,” or as if it were sanctioned by a law “inscribed with a diamond point” on their altars. The names of their gods used to be written on “the horns of the altars” (<sup><417Z></sup>Acts 17:23). As the clause “on their hearts” refers to their *inward* propensity, so “on ... altars,” the *outward* exhibition of it. Others refer “on the horns of ... altars” to their staining them with the blood of victims, in imitation of the Levitical precept (<sup><129C></sup>Exodus 29:12 <sup><134D></sup>Leviticus 4:7,18), but “written ... graven,” would thus be inappropriate.

**table of ... heart** — which God intended to be inscribed very differently, namely, with His truths (<sup><318B></sup>Proverbs 3:3 <sup><418B></sup>2 Corinthians 3:3).

**your** — Though “their” preceded, He directly addresses them to charge the guilt home to them in particular.

2. **children remember** — Instead of forsaking the idolatries of their fathers, they keep them up (<sup><347B></sup>Jeremiah 7:18). This is given as proof that their sin is “graven upon ... altars” (<sup><317E></sup>Jeremiah 17:1), that is, is not merely temporary. They corrupt their posterity after them. CASTALIO less probably translates, “They remember their altars as (fondly as) they do their children.”

**groves** — rather, “images of Astarte,” the goddess of the heavenly hosts, represented as a sacred tree, such as is seen in the Assyrian sculptures (<sup><1217></sup>2 Kings 21:7 <sup><448B></sup>2 Chronicles 24:18). “Image of the grove.” The *Hebrew* for “grove” is *Asherah*, that is, Assarak, Astarte, or Ashtaroth.

**by the green trees** — that is, near them: the sacred trees (idol symbols) of Astarte being placed in the midst of natural trees: “green trees” is thus distinguished from “groves,” *artificial* trees. HENDERSON, to avoid taking the same *Hebrew* particle in the same sentence differently, “by ... upon”

translates “images of Astarte *on* the green trees.” But it is not probable that images, in the form of a sacred tree, should be hung *on* trees, rather than *near* them.

**3. *mountain*** — Jerusalem, and especially Zion and the temple.

***in the field*** — As Jerusalem was surrounded by *mountains* (<sup>450</sup>Psalm 125:2), the sense probably is, Ye rely on your mountainous position (<sup>219</sup>Jeremiah 3:23), but I will make “My mountain” to become as if it were *in a plain* (field), so as to give thy substance an easy prey to the enemy [CALVIN]. “Field” may, however, mean *all Judea*; it and “My mountain” will thus express *the country and its capital*. (GESENIUS translates, “together with,” instead of “in”; as the *Hebrew* is translated in <sup>2119</sup>Jeremiah 11:19 <sup>306</sup>Hosea 5:6; but this is not absolutely needed), “the substance” of both of which God “will give to the spoil.”

***thy high places*** — corresponding in parallelism to “My mountain” (compare <sup>2109</sup>Isaiah 11:9), as “all thy borders,” to “the field” (which confirms the view that “field” means *all Judea*).

***for sin*** — connected with high places” in *English Version*, namely, frequented for sin, that is, for idolatrous sacrifices. But <sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 15:13 makes the rendering probable, “I will give thy substance ... to ... spoil ... *on account of thy sin throughout all thy borders.*”

**4. *even thyself*** — rather, “owing to thyself,” that is, by thy own fault (<sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 15:13).

***discontinue from*** — be dispossessed of. Not only thy substance, but thyself shall be carried off to a strange land (<sup>2454</sup>Jeremiah 15:14).

**5.** Referring to the Jews’ proneness to rely on Egypt, in its fear of Assyria and Babylon (<sup>2301</sup>Isaiah 31:1,3).

***trusteth*** — This word is emphatic. We may expect help from men, so far as God enables them to help us, but we must rest our trust in God alone (<sup>451</sup>Psalm 62:5).

**6. *heath*** — In <sup>1927</sup>Psalm 102:17 <sup>2211</sup>Isaiah 32:11 <sup>3109</sup>Habakkuk 3:9, the *Hebrew* is translated, “bare,” “naked,” “destitute”; but as the parallel in <sup>2478</sup>Jeremiah 17:8 is “tree,” some plant must be meant of which this is the characteristic epithet (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 48:6, *Margin*), “a naked tree.” ROBINSON translates, “the juniper tree,” found in the Arabah or Great Valley, here called “the desert,” south of the Dead Sea. The “heath” was one of the plants, according to PLINY (13.21; 16.26), excluded from religious uses, because it has neither fruit nor seed, and is neither sown nor planted.

*not see ... good* — (<sup><1807></sup>Job 20:17).

*salt land* — (<sup><1225></sup>Deuteronomy 29:23), barren ground.

7. (<sup><1848></sup>Psalms 34:8 <sup><1060></sup>Proverbs 16:20 <sup><2308></sup>Isaiah 30:18). Jeremiah first removed the weeds (false trusts), so that there might be room for the good grain [CALVIN].

8. (<sup><1008></sup>Psalms 1:3).

*shall not see* — that is, feel. Answering to <sup><2476></sup>Jeremiah 17:6; whereas the unbelievers “shall not see (even) when *good* cometh,” the believer “shall not see (so as to be overwhelmed by it even) when heat (fiery trial) cometh.” Trials shall come upon him as on all, nay, upon him especially (<sup><3217></sup>Hebrews 12:6); but he shall not sink under them, because the Lord is his secret strength, just as the “roots spread out by a river” (or, “water-course”) draw hidden support from it (<sup><1008></sup>2 Corinthians 4:8-11).

*careful* — anxious, as one desponding (<sup><1229></sup>Luke 12:29 <sup><1617></sup>1 Peter 5:7).

*drought* — literally, “withholding,” namely, of rain (<sup><2441></sup>Jeremiah 14:1); he here probably alludes to the drought which had prevailed, but makes it the type of all kinds of distress.

9. *deceitful* — from a root, “supplanting,” “tripping up insidiously by the heel,” from which Jacob (<sup><2808></sup>Hosea 12:3) took his name. In speaking of the Jews’ *deceit of heart*, he appropriately uses a term alluding to their forefather, whose deceit, but not whose faith, they followed. *His* “supplanting” was in order to obtain Jehovah’s blessing. They plant Jehovah for “trust in man” (<sup><2476></sup>Jeremiah 17:5), and then think to *deceive God*, as if it could escape His notice, that it is in *man*, not in Him, they trust.

*desperately wicked* — “incurable” [HORSLEY], (<sup><3008></sup>Micah 1:9). Trust in one’s own heart is as foolish as in our fellow man (<sup><1837></sup>Proverbs 28:26).

10. Lest any should infer from <sup><2479></sup>Jeremiah 17:9, “who can know it?” that even *the Lord* does not know, and therefore cannot punish, the hidden treachery of the heart, He says, “I the Lord search the heart,” etc. (<sup><1339></sup>1 Chronicles 28:9 <sup><1009></sup>Psalms 7:9 <sup><1078></sup>Proverbs 17:3 <sup><1123></sup>Revelation 2:23).

*even to give* — *and that* in order that I may give (<sup><2329></sup>Jeremiah 32:19).

11. *partridge* — (<sup><1821></sup>1 Samuel 26:20). *Hebrew, korea*, from a root, “to call,” alluding to its cry; a name still applied to a bustard by the Arabs. Its nest is liable, being on the ground, to be trodden under foot, or robbed by carnivorous animals, notwithstanding all the beautiful manoeuvres of the

parent birds to save the brood. The translation, “sitteth on eggs *which it has not laid*,” alludes to the ancient notion that she stole the eggs of other birds and hatched them as her own; and that the young birds when grown left her for the true mother. It is not needful to make Scripture allude to an exploded notion, as if it were true. MAURER thinks the reference is to Jehoiakim’s grasping cupidity (<sup><3223></sup>Jeremiah 22:13-17). Probably the sense is more general; as previously He condemned trust in man (<sup><2178></sup>Jeremiah 17:5), He now condemns another object of the deceitful hearts’ trust, *unjustly gotten riches* (<sup><3916></sup>Psalms 39:6 49:16,17 55:23).

**fool** — (<sup><2218></sup>Proverbs 23:5 <sup><2221></sup>Luke 12:20); “their folly” (<sup><3903></sup>Psalms 49:13). He himself, and all, shall at last perceive he was not the wise man he thought he was.

**12. throne** — the temple of Jerusalem, the throne of Jehovah. Having condemned false objects of trust, “*high places* for sin” (<sup><2173></sup>Jeremiah 17:3), and an “arm of flesh,” he next sets forth Jehovah, and *His temple*, which was ever open to the Jews, as the true object of confidence, and sanctuary to flee to. HENDERSON makes Jehovah, in <sup><2173></sup>Jeremiah 17:13, the subject, and this verse predicate, “A throne of glory, high from the beginning, the place of our sanctuary, the hope of Israel is Jehovah.” “Throne” is thus used for Him who sits on it; compare *thrones* (<sup><5116></sup>Colossians 1:16). He is called a “sanctuary” to His people (<sup><2184></sup>Isaiah 8:14 <sup><23116></sup>Ezekiel 11:16). So *Syriac* and *Arabic*.

**13. me** — “Jehovah.” Though “Thee” precedes. This sudden transition is usual in the prophetic style, owing to the prophet’s continual realization of Jehovah’s presence.

***all that forsake thee*** — (<sup><3727></sup>Psalms 73:27 <sup><23128></sup>Isaiah 1:28).

***written in the earth*** — in the dust, that is, shall be consigned to oblivion. So Jesus’ significant writing “on the ground (probably the accusers’ names)” (<sup><3886></sup>John 8:6). Names written in the dust are obliterated by a very slight wind. Their hopes and celebrity are wholly *in the earth*, not in the heavenly book of life (<sup><6138></sup>Revelation 13:8 20:12,15). The Jews, though boasting that they were the people of God, had no portion in heaven, no status before God and His angels. Contrast “written in heaven,” that is, in the muster-roll of its blessed citizens (<sup><2101></sup>Luke 10:20). Also, contrast “written in a book,” and “in the rock *for ever*” (<sup><3823></sup>Job 19:23,24).

***living waters*** — (<sup><2113></sup>Jeremiah 2:13).

**14-18.** Prayer of the prophet for deliverance from the enemies whom he excited by his faithful denunciations.

**Heal ... save** — not only *make me whole* (as to the evils of soul as well as body which I am exposed to by contact with ungodly foes, <sup><24518></sup>Jeremiah 15:18), but *keep me so*.

**my praise** — He whom I have to praise for past favors, and therefore to whom alone I look for the time to come.

**15. Where is the word?** — (<sup><21519></sup>Isaiah 5:19 <sup><31518></sup>Amos 5:18). Where is the fulfillment of the threats which thou didst utter as from God? A characteristic of the last stage of apostasy (<sup><61304></sup>2 Peter 3:4).

**16.** I have not refused Thy call of me to be a prophet (Jon 1:3), however painful to me it was to utter what would be sure to irritate the hearers (<sup><21004></sup>Jeremiah 1:4, etc.); therefore Thou shouldest not forsake me (<sup><24515></sup>Jeremiah 15:15, etc.).

**to follow thee** — literally, “after thee”; as an under-pastor following Thee, the Chief Shepherd (<sup><21211></sup>Ecclesiastes 12:11 <sup><41304></sup>1 Peter 5:4).

**neither ... desired** — I have not *wished* for the day of calamity, though I foretell it as about to come on my countrymen; therefore they have no reason for persecuting me.

**thou knowest** — I appeal to Thee for the truth of what I assert.

**that which came out of my lips** — my words (<sup><41223></sup>Deuteronomy 23:23).

**right before thee** — rather, “was before Thee”; was *known to Thee* — (<sup><21321></sup>Proverbs 5:21).

**17. a terror** — namely, by deserting me: all I fear is Thine abandoning me; if Thou art with me, I have no fear of evil from enemies.

**18. destroy ... destruction** — “break them with a double breach,” *Hebrew* (<sup><24477></sup>Jeremiah 14:17). On “double,” see on <sup><24168></sup>Jeremiah 16:18.

**19-27.** Delivered in the reign of Jehoiakim, who undid the good effected by Josiah’s reformation, especially as to the observance of the Sabbath [EICHORN].

**gate of ... children of ... people** — The gate next the king’s palace, called *the gate of David, and the gate of the people*, from its being the principal thoroughfare: now the Jaffa gate. It is probably the same as “the gate of the fountain” at the foot of Zion, near which were the king’s garden and pool (<sup><24304></sup>Jeremiah 39:4 <sup><22504></sup>2 Kings 25:4 <sup><41214></sup>Nehemiah 2:14 3:15 12:37).

**20. kings** — He begins with the kings, as they ought to have repressed such a glaring profanation.

**21. *Take heed to yourselves*** — literally, “to your souls.” MAURER explains, “as ye love your lives”; a phrase used here to give the greater weight to the command.

***sabbath*** — The non-observance of it was a chief cause of the captivity, the number of years of the latter, seventy, being exactly made to agree with the number of Sabbaths which elapsed during the four hundred ninety years of their possession of Canaan from Saul to their removal (<sup>-0334</sup>Leviticus 26:34,35 <sup>-4821</sup>2 Chronicles 36:21). On the restoration, therefore, stress was especially laid on Sabbath observance (<sup>-4639</sup>Nehemiah 13:19).

***Jerusalem*** — It would have been scandalous anywhere; but in the capital, *Jerusalem*, it was an open insult to God. Sabbath-hallowing is intended as a symbol of holiness in general (<sup>-2312</sup>Ezekiel 20:12); therefore much stress is laid on it; the Jews’ gross impiety is manifested in their setting God’s will at naught, in the case of such an easy and positive command.

**23.** (<sup>-2124</sup>Jeremiah 7:24,26).

**24.** A part put for the whole, “If ye keep the Sabbath and *My* other laws.”

**25. *kings ... in chariots*** — The kingdom at this time had been brought so low that this promise here was a special favor.

***remain*** — *Hebrew*, “be inhabited” (<sup>-2476</sup>Jeremiah 17:6 <sup>-2831</sup>Isaiah 13:20).

**26. *plain mountains ... south*** — (<sup>-0651</sup>Joshua 15:1-4). The southern border had extended to the river of Egypt, but was now much curtailed by Egyptian invasions (<sup>-4831</sup>2 Chronicles 35:20 36:3,4). The *Hebrew* for “south” means *dry*; the arid desert *south* of Judea is meant. The enumeration of all the parts of Judea, city, country, plain, hill, and desert, implies that no longer shall there be aught wanting of the integrity of the Jewish land (<sup>-3105</sup>Zechariah 7:7).

***sacrifices*** — As in <sup>-2472</sup>Jeremiah 17:22, one constituent of Judea’s prosperity is mentioned, namely, its *kings* on David’s throne, the pledge of God being its guardian; so in this verse another constituent, namely, its *priests*, a pledge of God being propitious to it (<sup>-3972</sup>Psalms 107:22).

**27. *burden ... in ... gates ... fire in the gates*** — retribution answering to the sin. The scene of their sin shall be the scene of their punishment (<sup>-3523</sup>Jeremiah 52:13 <sup>-4219</sup>2 Kings 25:9).

# CHAPTER 18

## JEREMIAH 18:1-23.

**GOD, AS THE SOLE SOVEREIGN, HAS AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO DEAL WITH NATIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR CONDUCT TOWARDS HIM; ILLUSTRATED IN A TANGIBLE FORM BY THE POTTER'S MOULDING OF VESSELS FROM CLAY.**

**2. *go down*** — namely, from the high ground on which the temple stood, near which Jeremiah exercised his prophetic office, to the low ground, where some well-known (this is the force of “the”) potter had his workshop.

**3. *wheels*** — literally, “on *both stones*.” The potter’s horizontal lathe consisted of two round plates, the lower one larger, the upper smaller; of stone originally, but afterwards of wood. On the upper the potter moulded the clay into what shapes he pleased. They are found represented in Egyptian remains. In <sup><3116></sup>Exodus 1:16 alone is the *Hebrew* word found elsewhere, but in a different sense.

**4. *marred*** — spoiled. “*Of clay*” is the true reading, which was corrupted into “*as clay*” (*Margin*), through the similarity of the two *Hebrew* letters, and from <sup><24816></sup>Jeremiah 18:6, “*as the clay*.”

**6.** Refuting the Jews’ reliance on their external privileges as God’s elect people, as if God could never cast them off. But if the potter, a mere creature, has power to throw away a marred vessel and raise up other clay from the ground, *a fortiori* God, the Creator, can cast away the people who prove unfaithful to His election and can raise others in their stead (compare <sup><24819></sup>Isaiah 45:9 64:8 <sup><3117></sup>Romans 9:20,21). It is curious that the *potter’s field* should have been the purchase made with the price of Judas’ treachery (<sup><41719></sup>Matthew 27:9,10: a potter’s vessel dashed to pieces, compare <sup><31112></sup>Psalm 2:8,9 <sup><41227></sup>Revelation 2:27), because of its failing to answer the maker’s design, being the very image to depict God’s sovereign power to give reprobates to destruction, not by caprice, but in the exercise of His righteous judgment. Matthew quotes Zechariah’s words (<sup><31112></sup>Zechariah 11:12,13) *as Jeremiah’s* because the latter (<sup><24816></sup>Jeremiah 18:1-19:15) was the source from



which the former derived his summary in <sup><38112></sup>Zechariah 11:12,13 [HENGSTENBERG].

**7. *At what instant*** — in a moment, when the nation least expects it. Hereby he reminds the Jews how marvellously God had delivered them from their original degradation, that is, In one and the same day ye were the most wretched, and then the most favored of all people [CALVIN].

**8. *their evil*** — in antithesis to, “the evil that *I* thought to do.”

***repent*** — God herein adapts Himself to human conceptions. The change is not in God, but in the circumstances which regulate God’s dealings: just as we say the land recedes from us when we sail forth, whereas it is we who recede from the land (<sup><24821></sup>Ezekiel 18:21 33:11). God’s unchangeable principle is to do the best that can be done under all circumstances; if then He did not take into account the moral change in His people (their prayers, etc.), He would not be acting according to His own unchanging principle (<sup><24839></sup>Jeremiah 18:9,10). This is applied practically to the Jews’ case (<sup><24841></sup>Jeremiah 18:11; see <sup><24843></sup>Jeremiah 26:3 Jon 3:10).

**11. *frame evil*** — alluding to the preceding image of “the potter,” that is, I, Jehovah, am now as it were the potter *framing* evil against you; but in the event of your repenting, it is in My power to *frame anew* My course of dealing towards you.

***return***, etc. — (<sup><24713></sup>2 Kings 17:13).

**12. *no hope*** — Thy threats and exhortations are all thrown away (<sup><24825></sup>Jeremiah 2:25). Our case is desperate; we are hopelessly abandoned to our sins and their penalty. In this and the following clauses, “We will walk after our own devices,” Jeremiah makes them express the *real* state of the case, rather than the hypocritical subterfuges which *they* would have been inclined to put forth. So <sup><23007></sup>Isaiah 30:10,11.

**13.** (<sup><24810></sup>Jeremiah 2:10,11). Even among the heathen it was a thing unheard of, that a nation should lay aside its gods for foreign gods, though their gods are false gods. But Israel forsook the true God for foreign false gods.

***virgin of Israel*** — (<sup><24821></sup>2 Kings 19:21). It enhances their guilt, that Israel was *the virgin* whom God had specially betrothed to Him.

***horrible thing*** — (<sup><24831></sup>Jeremiah 5:30).

**14.** Is there any man (living near it) who would leave the snow of Lebanon (that is, the cool melted snow water of Lebanon, as he presently explains), which cometh from the rock of the field (a poetical name for Lebanon,



which towers aloft above the surrounding *field*, or comparatively plain country)? None. Yet Israel forsakes Jehovah, the living fountain close at hand, for foreign broken cisterns. <sup>(-2173)</sup>Jeremiah 17:13 2:13, accord with *English Version* here. MAURER translates, “Shall the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock to water (literally, ‘forsake’) My fields” (the whole land around being peculiarly *Jehovah’s*)? *Lebanon* means the “white mountain”; so called from the perpetual snow which covers that part called Hermon, stretching northeast of Palestine.

**that come from another place** — that come from far, namely, from the distant lofty rocks of Lebanon. HENDERSON translates, “the *compressed* waters,” namely, contracted within a narrow channel while descending through the gorges of the rocks; “flowing” may in this view be rather “flowing down” (So 4:15). But the parallelism in *English Version* is better, “which cometh from the rock,” “that cometh from another place.”

**be forsaken** — answering to the parallel, “Will a man leave,” etc. MAURER translates, “dry up,” or “fail” (<sup>(-2395)</sup>Isaiah 19:5); the sense thus being, Will nature ever turn aside from its fixed course? The “cold waters” (compare <sup>(-3125)</sup>Proverbs 25:25) refer to the perennial streams, fed from the partial melting of the snow in the hot weather.

**15. Because** — rather, “And yet”; in defiance of the natural order of things.

**forgotten me** — (<sup>(-3123)</sup>Jeremiah 2:32). This implies a previous knowledge of God, whereas He was unknown to the Gentiles; the Jews’ forgetting of God, therefore, arose from determined perversity.

**they have caused ... to stumble** — namely the false prophets and idolatrous priests have.

**ancient paths** — (<sup>(-2166)</sup>Jeremiah 6:16): the paths which their pious ancestors trod. Not antiquity indiscriminately, but the example of the fathers who trod the right way, is here commended.

**them** — the Jews.

**not cast up** — not duly prepared: referring to the raised center of the road. CALVIN translates, “not trodden.” They had no precedent of former saints to induce them to devise for themselves a new worship.

**16. hissing** — (<sup>(-1008)</sup>1 Kings 9:8). In sign of contempt. That which was to be only the *event* is ascribed to the *purpose* of the people, although altogether different from what they would have been likely to hope for. Their *purpose* is represented as being the destruction of their country, because it was the *inevitable result* of their course of acting.

**wag ... head** — in mockery (<sup><1292></sup>2 Kings 19:21 <sup><1073></sup>Matthew 27:39). As “wag ... head” answers to “hissing,” so “astonished” answers to “desolate,” for which, therefore, MUNSTER and others rather translate, “an object of wonder” (<sup><3408></sup>Jeremiah 19:8).

**17. as with an east wind** — literally, “I will scatter them, *as an east wind* (scatters all before it)”: a most violent wind (<sup><8071></sup>Job 27:21 <sup><1980></sup>Psalms 48:7 <sup><3278></sup>Isaiah 27:8). Thirty-two manuscripts read (without *as*), “*with an east wind*.”

**I will show them the back ... not ... face** — just retribution: as “they turned their back unto Me ... not their face” (<sup><2427></sup>Jeremiah 2:27).

**18.** (<sup><24119></sup>Jeremiah 11:19). Let us bring a capital charge against him, as a false prophet; “for (whereas he foretells that this land shall be left without priests to teach the law, <sup><34107></sup>Malachi 2:7; without scribes to explain its difficulties; and without prophets to reveal God’s will), the law shall not perish from the prophet,” etc.; since God has made these a lasting institution in His church, and the law declares they shall never perish (<sup><1068></sup>Leviticus 6:18 10:11; compare <sup><24512></sup>Jeremiah 5:12) [GROTIUS].

**the wise** — scribes and elders joined to the priests. Perhaps they mean to say, we must have right on our side, in spite of Jeremiah’s words against us and our prophets (<sup><24085></sup>Jeremiah 28:15,16 29:25,32 5:31); “for the law shall not perish,” etc. I prefer GROTIUS’ explanation.

**with ... tongue** — by a false accusation (<sup><15704></sup>Psalms 57:4 64:3 12:4 50:19). “For the tongue” (*Margin*), that is, for his speaking against us. “In the tongue,” that is, let us kill him, that he may speak no more against us [CASTALIO].

**19. Give heed** — contrasted with, “let us not give heed” (<sup><24088></sup>Jeremiah 18:18). As *they* give no heed to me, do Thou, O Lord, give heed to me, and let my words at least have their weight with Thee.

**20.** In the particulars here specified, Jeremiah was a type of Jesus Christ (<sup><194904></sup>Psalms 109:4,5 <sup><81525></sup>John 15:25).

**my soul** — my life; me (<sup><198107></sup>Psalms 35:7).

**I stood before thee ... to turn away thy wrath** — so Moses (<sup><194623></sup>Psalms 106:23; compare <sup><32230></sup>Ezekiel 22:30). So Jesus Christ, the antitype of previous partial intercessors (<sup><23546></sup>Isaiah 59:16).

**21. pour out their blood by the force of the sword** — literally, “by the hands of the sword.” So <sup><35818></sup>Ezekiel 35:5. MAURER with JEROME translates,

“*deliver them over to the power of the sword.*” But compare <sup><6610></sup>Psalm 63:10, *Margin*; <sup><2612></sup>Isaiah 53:12. In this prayer he does not indulge in personal revenge, as if it were his own cause that was at stake; but he speaks under the dictation of the Spirit, ceasing to intercede, and speaking prophetically, knowing they were doomed to destruction as reprobates; for those not so, he doubtless ceased not to intercede. *We* are not to draw an example from this, which is a special case.

***put to death*** — or, as in <sup><4142></sup>Jeremiah 15:2, “perish by the *death plague*” [MAURER].

***men ... young men*** — HORSLEY distinguishes the former as *married men* past middle age; the latter, the flower of *unmarried youth*.

**22. *cry*** — by reason of the enemy bursting in: let their houses be no shelter to them in their calamities [CALVIN].

***digged ... pit*** — (<sup><4182></sup>Jeremiah 18:20 <sup><4576></sup>Psalm 57:6 119:85).

**23. *forgive not*** — (<sup><4949></sup>Psalm 109:9,10,14).

***blot out*** — image from an account-book (<sup><6712></sup>Revelation 20:12).

***before thee*** — Hypocrites suppose God is not near, so long as they escape punishment; but when He punishes, they are said to stand before Him, because they can no longer flatter themselves they can escape His eye (compare <sup><4908></sup>Psalm 90:8).

***deal thus*** — exert Thy power against them [MAURER].

***time of thine anger*** — Though He seems to tarry, His time shall come at last (<sup><2081></sup>Ecclesiastes 8:11,12 <sup><4182></sup>2 Peter 3:9,10).

# CHAPTER 19

## JEREMIAH 19:1-15.

### THE DESOLATION OF THE JEWS FOR THEIR SINS FORETOLD IN THE VALLEY OF HINNOM; THE SYMBOL OF BREAKING A BOTTLE.

Referred by MAURER, etc., to the beginning of Zedekiah's reign.

1. **bottle** — *Hebrew, bakuk*, so called from the gurgling sound which it makes when being emptied.

**ancients** — elders. As witnesses of the symbolic action (<sup><2490></sup>Jeremiah 19:10 <sup><2381></sup>Isaiah 8:1,2), that the Jews might not afterwards plead ignorance of the prophecy. The seventy-two elders, composing the Sanhedrim, or Great Council, were taken partly from “the priests,” partly from the other tribes, that is, “the people,” the former presiding over spiritual matters, the latter over civil; the seventy-two represented the whole people.

2. **valley of the son of Hinnom** — or Tophet, south of Jerusalem, where human victims were offered, and children made to pass through the fire, in honor of Molech.

**east gate** — *Margin*, “sun gate,” sunrise being in the *east*. MAURER translates, the “potter’s gate.” Through it lay the road to the valley of Hinnom (<sup><6158></sup>Joshua 15:8). The potters there formed vessels for the use of the temple, which was close by (compare <sup><2490></sup>Jeremiah 19:10,14 <sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 18:2 <sup><3813></sup>Zechariah 11:13). The same as “*the water gate toward the east*” (<sup><4183></sup>Nehemiah 3:26 12:37); so called from the brook Kedron. CALVIN translates, as *English Version* and *Margin*. “It was monstrous perversity to tread the law under foot in so conspicuous a place, over which the sun daily rising reminded them of the light of God’s law.”

3. The scene of their guilt is chosen as the scene of the denunciation against them.

**kings** — the king and queen (<sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 13:18); or including the king’s counsellors and governors under him.

**tingle** — as if struck by a thunder peal (<sup><9181></sup>1 Samuel 3:11 <sup><1212></sup>2 Kings 21:12).

4. (<sup>2651</sup>Isaiah 65:11).

*estranged this place* — devoted it to the worship of strange gods: alienating a portion of the sacred city from God, the rightful Lord of the temple, city, and whole land.

*nor their fathers* — namely, the *godly* among them; their *ungodly* fathers God makes no account of.

*blood of innocents* — slain in honor of Molech (<sup>2473</sup>Jeremiah 7:31 <sup>19467</sup>Psalms 106:37).

5. *commanded not* — nay, more, I commanded the opposite (<sup>18821</sup>Leviticus 18:21; see <sup>2473</sup>Jeremiah 7:31,32).

6. *no more ... Tophet* — from *Hebrew*, *toph*, “drum”; for in sacrificing children to Molech drums were beaten to drown their cries. Thus the name indicated the joy of the people at the fancied propitiation of the god by this sacrifice; in antithesis to its joyless name subsequently.

*valley of slaughter* — It should be the scene of slaughter, no longer of children, but of men; not of “innocents” (<sup>24904</sup>Jeremiah 19:4), but of those who richly deserved their fate. The city could not be assailed without first occupying the valley of Hinnom, in which was the only fountain: hence arose the violent battle there.

7. *make void the counsel* — defeat their plans for repelling the enemy (<sup>44312</sup>Chronicles 32:1-4 <sup>24908</sup>Isaiah 19:3 22:9,11). Or their schemes of getting help by having recourse to idols [CALVIN].

*in this place* — The valley of Hinnom was to be the place of the Chaldean encampment; the very place where they looked for help from idols was to be the scene of their own slaughter.

8. (See on <sup>24866</sup>Jeremiah 18:16).

9. (<sup>18855</sup>Deuteronomy 28:53 <sup>25010</sup>Lamentations 4:10).

10. *break ... bottle* — a symbolical action, explained in <sup>24891</sup>Jeremiah 19:11.

*the men* — the elders of the people and of the priests (<sup>24903</sup>Jeremiah 19:1; compare <sup>25066</sup>Jeremiah 51:63,64).

11. *as one breaketh a potters vessel* — expressing God’s absolute sovereignty (<sup>24806</sup>Jeremiah 18:6 <sup>4909</sup>Psalms 2:9 <sup>23144</sup>Isaiah 30:14, *Margin*; <sup>2408</sup>Lamentations 4:2 <sup>4800</sup>Romans 9:20,21).

***cannot be made whole again*** — A broken potter's vessel cannot be restored, but a new one may be made of the same material. So God raised a new Jewish seed, not identical with the destroyed rebels, but by substituting another generation in their stead [GROTIUS].

***no place to bury*** — (<sup>3472</sup>Jeremiah 7:32).

**12. *make this city as Tophet*** — that is, as defiled with dead bodies as Tophet.

**13. *shall be defiled*** — with dead bodies (<sup>3492</sup>Jeremiah 19:12 <sup>4230</sup>2 Kings 23:10).

***because of all the houses*** — Rather, (explanatory of the previous “the houses ... and ... houses”), “*even* all the houses,” etc. [CALVIN].

***roofs*** — being flat, they were used as high places for sacrifices to the sun and planets (<sup>3472</sup>Jeremiah 32:29 <sup>4231</sup>2 Kings 23:11,12 <sup>3005</sup>Zephaniah 1:5). The Nabateans, south and east of the Dead Sea, a nation most friendly to the Jews, according to STRABO, had the same usage.

**14. *court of the Lord's house*** — near Tophet; the largest court, under the open air, where was the greatest crowd (<sup>4015</sup>2 Chronicles 20:5).

**15. *her towns*** — the suburban villages and towns near Jerusalem, such as Bethany.

# CHAPTER 20

## JEREMIAH 20:1-18.

### JEREMIAH'S INCARCERATION BY PASHUR, THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER OF THE TEMPLE, FOR PROPHECYING WITHIN ITS PRECINCTS; HIS RENEWED PREDICTIONS AGAINST THE CITY, ETC., ON HIS LIBERATION.

1. **son** — descendant.

**of Immer** — one of the original “governors of the sanctuary and of the house of God,” twenty-four in all, that is, sixteen of the sons of Eleazar and eight of the sons of Ithamar (<sup><1344></sup>1 Chronicles 24:14). This Pashur is distinct from Pashur, *son of Melchiah* (<sup><2103></sup>Jeremiah 21:1). The “captains” (<sup><2214></sup>Luke 22:4) seem to have been over the twenty-four guards of the temple, and had only the right of *apprehending* any who were guilty of delinquency within it; but the Sanhedrim had the *judicial power* over such delinquents [GROTIUS] (<sup><2618></sup>Jeremiah 26:8,10,16).

2. The fact that Pashur was of the same order and of the same family as Jeremiah aggravates the indignity of the blow (<sup><1224></sup>1 Kings 22:24 <sup><1167></sup>Matthew 26:67).

**stocks** — an instrument of torture with five holes, in which the neck, two hands, and two feet were thrust, the body being kept in a crooked posture (<sup><2926></sup>Jeremiah 29:26). From a *Hebrew* root, to “turn,” or “rack.” This marks Pashur’s cruelty.

**high** — that is, *the upper gate* (<sup><1259></sup>2 Kings 15:35).

**gate of Benjamin** — a gate in the temple wall, corresponding to the gate of Benjamin, properly so called, in the city wall, in the direction of the territory of Benjamin (<sup><2103></sup>Jeremiah 7:2 37:13 38:7). The temple gate of Benjamin, being on a lofty position, was called “the high gate,” to distinguish it from the city wall gate of Benjamin.

3. **Pashur** — compounded of two roots, meaning “largeness (and so ‘security’) *on every side*”; in antithesis to *Magor-missabib*, “terror *round about*” (<sup><2110></sup>Jeremiah 20:10 <sup><2465></sup>Jeremiah 6:25 46:5 49:29 <sup><9813></sup>Psalms 31:13).

**4. terror ... to all thy friends** — who have believed thy false promises (<sup>2406</sup>Jeremiah 20:6). The sense must be in order to accord with “fear round about” (<sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 20:3). I will bring terror on thee and on all thy friends, that terror arising from thyself, namely, thy false prophecies. Thou and thy prophecies will be seen, to the dismay both of thee and thy dupes, to have caused their ruin and thine. MAURER’S translation is therefore not needed, “I will give up thee and all thy friends to terror.”

**5. strength** — that is, resources.

**labors** — fruits of labor, gain, wealth.

**6. prophesied lies** — namely, that God cannot possibly leave this land without prophets, priests, and teachers (“the wise”) (<sup>2488</sup>Jeremiah 18:18; compare <sup>2433</sup>Jeremiah 5:31).

**7.** Jeremiah’s complaint, not unlike that of Job, breathing somewhat of human infirmity in consequence of his imprisonment. Thou didst promise never to give me up to the will of mine enemies, and yet Thou hast done so. But Jeremiah misunderstood God’s promise, which was not that he should have nothing to suffer, but that God would deliver him out of sufferings (<sup>2419</sup>Jeremiah 1:19).

**deceived** — Others translate as *Margin*, “Thou hast enticed” or “persuaded me,” namely, to undertake the prophetic office, “and I was persuaded,” that is, suffered myself to be persuaded to undertake what I find too hard for me. So the *Hebrew* word is used in a good sense (<sup>4027</sup>Genesis 9:27, *Margin*; <sup>2155</sup>Proverbs 25:15 <sup>2124</sup>Hosea 2:14).

**stronger than I** — Thou whose strength I could not resist hast laid this burden on me, and hast prevailed (hast made me prophesy, in spite of my reluctance) (<sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 1:5-7); yet, when I exercise my office, I am treated with derision (<sup>2164</sup>Lamentations 3:14).

**8.** Rather, “Whenever I speak, I cry out. Concerning violence and spoil, I (am compelled to) cry out,” that is, complain [MAURER]. *English Version* in the last clause is more graphic, “I cried violence and spoil” (<sup>2407</sup>Jeremiah 6:7)! I could not speak in a calm tone; their desperate wickedness compelled me to “cry out.”

**because** — rather, “therefore,” the apodosis of the previous sentence; *because* in discharging my prophetic functions, I not merely *spoke*, but *cried*; and *cried, violence ...*; *therefore* the word of the Lord was made a reproach to me (<sup>2407</sup>Jeremiah 20:7).



**9. *his word was*** — or literally, “there was in my heart, as it were, a burning fire,” that is, the divine afflatus or impulse to speak was as ... (<sup><4828></sup>Job 32:18,19 <sup><4918></sup>Psalms 39:3).

***weary with forbearing, and I could not*** — “I labored to contain myself, but I could not” (<sup><4816></sup>Acts 18:5; compare <sup><4239></sup>Jeremiah 23:9 <sup><4016></sup>1 Corinthians 9:16,17).

**10. *For*** — not referring to the words immediately preceding, but to “I will not make mention of Him.” The “defaming” or *detractio*n of the enemy on every side (see <sup><4913></sup>Psalms 31:13) tempted him to think of prophesying no more.

***Report ... we will report*** — The words of his adversaries one to the other; give any information against him (true or false) which will give color for accusing him; and “we will report it,” namely, to the Sanhedrim, in order to crush him.

***familiars*** — literally, “men of my peace”; those who pretended to be on peaceable terms with me (<sup><3419></sup>Psalms 41:9). Jeremiah is a type of Messiah, referred to in that Psalm. (See <sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 38:22 <sup><4899></sup>Job 19:19 <sup><4953></sup>Psalms 55:13,14 <sup><4153></sup>Luke 11:53,54).

***watched for my halting*** — (<sup><4955></sup>Psalms 35:15, *Margin*, “halting”; <sup><4987></sup>Psalms 38:17 71:10, *Margin*). GESENIUS not so well translates, according to *Arabic* idiom, “those guarding my side” (that is, my most intimate friends *always at my side*), in apposition to “familiars,” and the subject of “say” (instead of “saying”). The *Hebrew* means properly “side,” then “halting,” as the halt bend on one side.

***enticed*** — to commit some sin.

**11. *not prevail*** — as they hoped to do (<sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 20:10 <sup><2457></sup>Jeremiah 15:20).

***prosper*** — in their plot.

**12. *triest the righteous*** — in latent contrast to the hasty judgments of men (<sup><2411></sup>Jeremiah 11:20 17:10).

***opened*** — that is, committed (compare <sup><4294></sup>2 Kings 19:14 <sup><4981></sup>Psalms 35:1).

**13. *delivered ... soul*** — This deliverance took place when Zedekiah succeeded Jeconiah.

**14-18.** The contrast between the spirit of this passage and the preceding *thanksgiving* is to be explained thus: to show how great was the deliverance

(<sup>2013</sup>Jeremiah 20:13), he subjoins a picture of what his wounded spirit *had been* previous to his deliverance; I *had said* in the time of my imprisonment, “Cursed be the day”; my feeling was that of Job (<sup>3008</sup>Job 3:3,10,11, whose words Jeremiah therefore copies). Though Jeremiah’s zeal had been stirred up, not so much for self as for God’s honor trampled on by the rejection of the prophet’s words, yet it was intemperate when he made his birth a subject for *cursing*, which was really a ground for thanksgiving.

**15. *A man child*** — The birth of a son is in the *East* a special subject of joy; whereas that of a daughter is often not so.

**16. *the cities*** — Sodom and Gomorrah.

***cry ... morning ... noontide*** — that is, Let him be kept in alarm the *whole day* (not merely at *night* when terrors ordinarily prevail, but in *daytime* when it is something extraordinary) with terrifying war shouts, as those in a besieged city (<sup>2482</sup>Jeremiah 18:22).

**17. *he*** — “that man” (<sup>2015</sup>Jeremiah 20:15,16).

***from the womb*** — that is, at that time while I was still in the womb.

# CHAPTER 21

## JEREMIAH 21:1-14.

### ZEDEKIAH CONSULTS JEREMIAH WHAT IS TO BE THE EVENT OF THE WAR: GOD'S ANSWER.

Written probably when, after having repulsed the Egyptians who brought succors to the Jews (<sup><3676></sup>Jeremiah 37:5-8 <sup><12475></sup>2 Kings 24:7), the Chaldees were a second time advancing against Jerusalem, but were not yet closely besieging it (<sup><3206></sup>Jeremiah 21:4,13) [ROSENMULLER]. This chapter probably ought to be placed between the thirty-seventh and thirty-eight chapters; since what the “princes,” in <sup><3800></sup>Jeremiah 38:2, represent Jeremiah as having said, is exactly what we find in <sup><3209></sup>Jeremiah 21:9. Moreover, the same persons as here (<sup><3206></sup>Jeremiah 21:1) are mentioned in <sup><3678></sup>Jeremiah 37:3 <sup><3801></sup>Jeremiah 38:1, namely, Pashur and Zephaniah. What is here more fully related is there simply referred to in the historical narrative. Compare <sup><3524></sup>Jeremiah 52:24 <sup><1258></sup>2 Kings 25:18 [MAURER].

1. *Zedekiah* — a prince having some reverence for sacred things, for which reason he sends an honorable embassy to Jeremiah; but not having moral courage to obey his better impulses.

*Pashur* — son of Melchiah, of the fifth order of priests, distinct from Pashur, son of Immer (<sup><3206></sup>Jeremiah 20:1), of the sixteenth order (<sup><4304></sup>1 Chronicles 24:9,14).

*Zephaniah* — of the twenty-fourth order. They are designated, not by their father, but by their family (<sup><4308></sup>1 Chronicles 24:18).

2. *Nebuchadrezzar* — the more usual way of spelling the name in Jeremiah than Nebuchadnezzar. From *Persiac* roots, meaning either “Nebo, the chief of the gods,” or, “Nebo, the god of fire.” He was son of Nabopolassar, who committed the command of the army against Egypt, at Carchemish, and against Judea, to the Brown prince.

*according to all his wondrous works* — Zedekiah hopes for God's special interposition, such as was vouchsafed to Hezekiah against Sennacherib (<sup><12685></sup>2 Kings 19:35,36).

*he* — Nebuchadnezzar.

**go up from us** — rise up from the siege which he sat down to lay (<sup>2676</sup>Jeremiah 37:5,11, *Margin*; <sup>4163</sup>Numbers 16:24,27 <sup>1159</sup>1 Kings 15:19, *Margin*).

**4. God of Israel** — Those “wondrous works” (<sup>2902</sup>Jeremiah 21:2) do not belong to you; *God* is faithful; it is *you* who forfeit the privileges of the covenant by unfaithfulness. “God will always remain *the God of Israel*, though He destroy thee and thy people” [CALVIN].

**turn back the weapons** — I will turn them to a very different use from what you intend them. With them you now fight against the Chaldees “without the walls” (the Jewish defenders being as yet able to sally forth more freely, and defend the fountains outside the walls in the valley under Mount Zion; see <sup>2913</sup>Jeremiah 21:13 <sup>3406</sup>Jeremiah 19:6,7); but soon ye shall be driven back within the city [MAURER], and “in the midst” of it, I will cause all your arms to be gathered in one place (“I will assemble *them*,” namely, your arms) by the Chaldean conquerors [GROTIUS], who shall slay you with those very arms [MENOCHIUS].

**5.** The Jews shall have not merely the Chaldees, but Jehovah Himself in wrath at their provocations, fighting against them. Every word enhances the formidable character of God’s opposition, “I myself ... outstretched hand ... strong arm (no longer as in <sup>1069</sup>Exodus 6:6, and in the case of Sennacherib, in your behalf, but) in anger ... fury ... great wrath.”

**7. the people, and such** — rather, explanatory, “the people,” namely, “such as are left.”

**seek their life** — content with nothing short of their death; not content with plundering and enslaving them.

**smite with ... sword** — This was the fate of Zedekiah’s sons and many of the Jewish nobles. Zedekiah himself, though not put to a violent death, died of grief. Compare as to the accurate fulfillment, <sup>2608</sup>Jeremiah 34:4 <sup>2923</sup>Ezekiel 12:13 <sup>226</sup>2 Kings 25:6,7.

**8.** “Life,” if ye surrender; “death,” if ye persist in opposing the Chaldees (compare <sup>609</sup>Deuteronomy 30:19). The individuality of Jeremiah’s mission from God is shown in that he urges to unconditional surrender; whereas all former prophets had urged the people to oppose their invaders (<sup>2376</sup>Isaiah 7:16 37:33,35).

**9.** (<sup>2802</sup>Jeremiah 38:2,17,18).

**falleth to** — deserts to.

**life ... a prey** — proverbial, to make one's escape with life, like a valuable spoil or prey that one carries off; the narrowness of the escape, and the joy felt at it, are included in the idea (<sup><2318></sup>Jeremiah 39:18).

**10. set ... face against** — determined to punish (See on <sup><1870></sup>Leviticus 17:10).

**12. house of David** — the royal family and all in office about the king. He calls them so, because it was the greater disgrace that they had so degenerated from the piety of their forefather, *David*; and to repress their glorying in their descent from him, as if they were therefore inviolable; but God will not spare them as apostates.

**in the morning** — alluding to *the time* of dispensing justice (<sup><1847></sup>Job 24:17 <sup><1948></sup>Psalms 101:8); but the sense is mainly proverbial, for “with promptness” (<sup><1904></sup>Psalms 90:14 143:8). MAURER translates, “every morning.”

**lest my fury ... like fire** — Already it was kindled, and the decree of God gone forth against the city (<sup><2104></sup>Jeremiah 21:4,5), but the king and his house may yet be preserved by repentance and reformation. God urges to righteousness, not as if they can thereby escape punishment wholly, but as the condition of a *mitigation* of it.

**13. inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain** — Jerusalem personified; situated for the most part on hills, with valleys at the bottom of them, as the valley of Hinnom, etc.; and beyond the valleys and mountains again, a position most fortified by nature, whence the inhabitants fancied themselves beyond the reach of enemies; but since God is “against” them, their position will avail nothing for them. The “valley” between Mount Zion and Moriah is called Tyropoeon. ROBINSON takes, “rock of the plain” as Mount Zion, *on which* is a *level tract* of some extent. It is appropriately here referred to, being the site of the royal residence of the “house of David,” addressed (<sup><2112></sup>Jeremiah 21:12).

**14. fruit of your doings** — (<sup><2039></sup>Proverbs 1:31 <sup><2180></sup>Isaiah 3:10,11).

**forest thereof** — namely of your city, taken from <sup><2113></sup>Jeremiah 21:13. “Forest” refers to the dense mass of houses built of cedar, etc. brought from Lebanon (<sup><2217></sup>Jeremiah 22:7 52:13 <sup><2239></sup>2 Kings 25:9).

# CHAPTER 22

## JEREMIAH 22:1-30.

### EXHORTATION TO REPENTANCE; JUDGMENT ON SHALLUM, JEHOIAKIM, AND CONIAH.

Belonging to an earlier period than the twenty-first chapter, namely, the reigns of Shallum or Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jeconiah (<sup>22:10</sup>Jeremiah 22:10,13,20). Jeremiah often groups his prophecies, not by chronological order, but by *similarity of subjects*; thus <sup>22:3</sup>Jeremiah 22:3 corresponds to <sup>21:12</sup>Jeremiah 21:12. GROTIUS thinks that Jeremiah here *repeats* to Zedekiah what he had announced to that king's predecessors *formerly* (namely, his brother and brother's son), of a similar bearing, and which had since come to pass; a warning to Zedekiah. Probably, in *arranging* his prophecies they were grouped for the first time in the present order, designed by the Holy Spirit to set forth the series of kings of Judah, all four alike, failing in "righteousness," followed at last by the "King," *a righteous Branch raised unto David*, in the house of Judah, "the Lord our righteousness" (<sup>23:6</sup>Jeremiah 23:6). The unrighteousness of Zedekiah suggested the review of his predecessors' failure in the same respects, and consequent punishment, which ought to have warned him, but did not.

**1. *Go down*** — The temple (where Jeremiah had been prophesying) was higher than the king's palace on Mount Zion (<sup>36:10,12</sup>Jeremiah 36:10,12 <sup>23:20</sup>2 Chronicles 23:20). Hence the phrase, "Go down."

***the king of Judah*** — perhaps including *each of the four successive kings*, to whom it was consecutively addressed, here brought together in one picture: Shallum, Jeremiah 22: 11; Jehoiakim, Jeremiah 22: 13-18; Jeconiah, <sup>22:24</sup>Jeremiah 22:24; Zedekiah, the address to whom (<sup>21:1,11,12</sup>Jeremiah 21:1,11,12) suggests notice of the rest.

**2. *these gates*** — of the king's palace.

**3. *Jehoiakim*** is meant here especially: he, by oppression, levied the tribute imposed on him by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt (<sup>36:3</sup>2 Chronicles 36:3), and taxed his people, and took their labor without pay, to build gorgeous palaces for himself (<sup>22:13-17</sup>Jeremiah 22:13-17), and shed innocent blood, for example, that of Urijah the prophet (<sup>26:20-24</sup>Jeremiah 26:20-24 <sup>23:35</sup>2 Kings 23:35 24:4).

**4. upon the throne of David** — literally, “or David on his throne” (see on <sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 13:13). This verse is repeated substantially from <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 17:25.

**his servants** — so the *Keri*. But *Chetib*, singular, “his servant;” that is, distributively, “each with his servants;” <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 17:25, “their princes.”

**5. I swear by myself** — (<sup><2663></sup>Hebrews 6:13,17). God swears because it seemed to them incredible that the family of David should be cast off.

**this house** — the king’s, where Jeremiah spake (<sup><2214></sup>Jeremiah 22:4).

**6.** Though thou art as beautiful as Gilead, and as majestic in Mine eyes (before Me) as the summit of Lebanon, yet surely (the *Hebrew* is a formula of swearing to express *certainly*: “If I do not make thee ... believe Me not ever hereafter”: so “as truly as I live,” <sup><0448></sup>Numbers 14:28; “surely,” <sup><0445></sup>Numbers 14:35). The mention of Gilead may allude not only to its past beauty, but covertly also to its desolation by the judgment on Israel; a warning now to Judah and the house of “David.” “Lebanon” is appropriately mentioned, as the king’s house was built of its noble cedars.

**cities** — not other *cities*, but the different *parts* of the *city* of Jerusalem (<sup><1022></sup>Samuel 12:27 <sup><1205></sup>2 Kings 10:25) [MAURER].

**7. prepare** — literally, “sanctify,” or solemnly set apart for a particular work (compare <sup><2318></sup>Isaiah 13:3).

**thy choice cedars** — (<sup><2524></sup>Isaiah 37:24). Thy palaces built of choice cedars (So 1:17).

**8.** (<sup><1324></sup>Deuteronomy 29:24,25). The Gentile nations, more intelligent than you, shall understand that which ye do not, namely, that this city is a spectacle of God’s vengeance [CALVIN].

**9.** (<sup><1227></sup>2 Kings 22:17).

**10, 11. Weep ... not for** — that is, not so much for Josiah, who was taken away by death from the evil to come (<sup><1220></sup>2 Kings 22:20 <sup><2571></sup>Isaiah 57:1); as for Shallum or Jehoahaz, his son (<sup><1230></sup>2 Kings 23:30), who, after a three months’ reign, was carried off by Pharaoh-necho into Egypt, never to see his native land again (<sup><1231></sup>2 Kings 23:31-34). Dying saints are justly to be envied, while living sinners are to be pitied. The allusion is to the great weeping of the people at the death of Josiah, and on each anniversary of it, in which Jeremiah himself took a prominent part (<sup><1454></sup>2 Chronicles 35:24,25). The name “Shallum” is here given in irony to Jehoahaz, who reigned but three months; as if he were a second Shallum, son of Jabesh,

who reigned only *one month* in Samaria (<sup><2153></sup>2 Kings 15:13 <sup><4801></sup>2 Chronicles 36:1-4). Shallum means “retribution,” a name of no good omen to him [GROTIUS]; originally the people called him *Shallom*, indicative of *peace* and prosperity. But Jeremiah applies it in irony. <sup><1185></sup>1 Chronicles 3:15, calls Shallum the *fourth* son of Josiah. The people raised him to the throne before his brother Eliakim or Jehoiakim, though the latter was the older (<sup><2281></sup>2 Kings 23:31,36 <sup><4801></sup>2 Chronicles 36:1); perhaps on account of Jehoiakim’s extravagance (<sup><3223></sup>Jeremiah 22:13,15). Jehoiakim was put in Shallum’s (Jehoahaz’) stead by Pharaoh-necho. Jeconiah, his son, succeeded. Zedekiah (Mattaniah), uncle of Jeconiah, and brother of Jehoiakim and Jehoahaz, was last of all raised to the throne by Nebuchadnezzar.

***He shall not return*** — The people perhaps entertained hopes of Shallum’s return from Egypt, in which case they would replace him on the throne, and thereby free themselves from the oppressive taxes imposed by Jehoiakim.

**13.** Not only did Jehoiakim tax the people (<sup><2235></sup>2 Kings 23:35) for Pharaoh’s tribute, but also took their forced labor, without pay, for building a splendid palace; in violation of <sup><1893></sup>Leviticus 19:13 <sup><5244></sup>Deuteronomy 24:14,15. Compare <sup><3180></sup>Micah 3:10 <sup><3110></sup>Habakkuk 2:9 <sup><3014></sup>James 5:4. God will repay in justice those who will not in justice pay those whom they employ.

**14. *wide*** — literally, “a house of dimensions” (“measures”). Compare <sup><4152></sup>Numbers 13:32, *Margin*, “men of statures.”

***large*** — rather, as *Margin*, “airy” from *Hebrew* root, “to breathe freely.” Upper rooms in the East are the principal apartments.

***cutteth him out windows*** — The *Hebrew*, if a noun, is rather, “my windows”; then the translation ought to be, “and let my windows (Jehoiakim speaking) be cut out for it,” that is, in the house; or, “and let (the workman) cut out my windows for it.” But the word is rather an adjective; “he cutteth it (the house) out for himself, so as to be *full of windows*.” The following words accord with this construction, “and (he makes it) ceiled with cedar,” etc. [MAURER]. Retaining *English Version*, there must be understood something remarkable about the windows, since they are deemed worthy of notice. GESENIUS thinks thinks the word *dual*, “double windows,” the *blinds* being *two-leaved*.

***vermilion*** — *Hebrew*, *shashar*, called so from a people of India beyond the Ganges, by whom it is exported [PLINY, 6.19]. The old vermilion was composed of sulphur and quicksilver; not of red lead, as our vermilion.



**15. *closest thyself*** — rather, “thou viest,” that is, art emulous to surpass thy forefathers in the magnificence of thy palaces.

***eat and drink*** — Did not Josiah, thy father, enjoy all that man *really needs* for his bodily wants? Did he need to build costly palaces to secure his throne? Nay, he *did secure* it by “judgment and justice”; whereas thou, with all thy luxurious building, sittest on a *tottering* throne.

***then*** — on that account, therefore.

**16. *was not this to know me*** — namely, to show by *deeds* that one knows God’s will, as was the case with Josiah (compare <sup><4817></sup>John 13:17; contrast <sup><5016></sup>Titus 1:16).

**17. *thine*** — as opposed to thy father, Josiah.

**18. *Ah my brother! ... sister!*** — addressing him with such titles of affection as one would address to a deceased friend beloved as a *brother* or *sister* (compare <sup><1130></sup>1 Kings 13:30). This expresses, They shall not lament him with the lamentation of *private individuals* [VATABLUS], or of *blood relatives* [GROTIUS]: as “Ah! lord,” expresses *public* lamentation *in the case of a king* [VATABLUS], or that of *subjects* [GROTIUS]. HENDERSON thinks, “Ah! sister,” refers to Jehoiakim’s queen, who, though taken to Babylon and not left unburied on the way, as Jehoiakim, yet was not honored at her death with royal lamentations, such as would have been poured forth over her at Jerusalem. He notices the beauty of Jeremiah’s manner in his prophecy against Jehoiakim. In <sup><3213></sup>Jeremiah 22:13,14 he describes him in general terms; then, in <sup><3215></sup>Jeremiah 22:15-17, he directly addresses him without naming him; at last, in <sup><3218></sup>Jeremiah 22:18, he names him, but in the third person, to imply that God puts him to a distance from Him. The boldness of the Hebrew prophets proves their divine mission; were it not so, their reproofs to the Hebrew kings, who held the throne by divine authority, would have been treason.

***Ah his glory!*** — “Alas! his majesty.”

**19. *burial of an ass*** — that is, he shall have the same burial as an ass would get, namely, he shall be left a prey for beasts and birds [JEROME]. This is not formally narrated. But <sup><4816></sup>2 Chronicles 36:6 states that “Nebuchadnezzar bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon”; his treatment there is nowhere mentioned. The prophecy here, and in <sup><3630></sup>Jeremiah 36:30, harmonizes these two facts. He was slain by Nebuchadnezzar, who changed his purpose of taking him to Babylon, on the way thither, and left him unburied outside Jerusalem. <sup><2416></sup>2 Kings 24:6, “Jehoiakim slept with his fathers,” does not contradict this; it simply

expresses his being gathered to his fathers by *death*, not his being *buried* with his fathers (<sup><4969></sup>Psalm 49:19). The two phrases are found together, as expressing two distinct ideas (<sup><1258></sup>2 Kings 15:38 16:20).

**20.** Delivered in the reign of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah or Coniah), son of Jehoiakim; appended to the previous prophecy respecting Jehoiakim, on account of the similarity of the two prophecies. He calls on Jerusalem, personified as a mourning female, to go up to the highest points visible from Jerusalem, and lament there (see on <sup><3492></sup>Jeremiah 3:21) the calamity of herself, bereft of allies and of her princes, who are one after the other being cast down.

**Bashan** — north of the region beyond Jordan; the mountains of Anti-libanus are referred to (<sup><4985></sup>Psalm 68:15).

**from the passages** — namely, of the rivers (<sup><4726></sup>Judges 12:6); or else the borders of the country (<sup><4933></sup>1 Samuel 13:23 <sup><2109></sup>Isaiah 10:29). The passes (<sup><4944></sup>1 Samuel 14:4). MAURER translates, “Abarim,” a mountainous tract beyond Jordan, opposite Jericho, and south of Bashan; this accords with the mention of the mountains Lebanon and Bashan (<sup><472></sup>Numbers 27:12 33:47).

**lovers** — the allies of Judea, especially Egypt, now unable to help the Jews, being crippled by Babylon (<sup><1247></sup>2 Kings 24:7).

**21.** I admonished thee in time. Thy sin has not been a sin of ignorance or thoughtlessness, but wilful.

**prosperity** — given thee by Me; yet thou wouldest not hearken to the gracious Giver. The *Hebrew* is *plural*, to express, “In *the height* of thy prosperity”; so “droughts” (<sup><2881></sup>Isaiah 58:11).

**thou saidst** — not in words, but in thy conduct, virtually.

**thy youth** — from the time that I brought thee out of Egypt, and formed thee into a people (<sup><3475></sup>Jeremiah 7:25 2:2 <sup><2372></sup>Isaiah 47:12).

**22. wind** — the Chaldees, as a parching wind that sweeps over rapidly and withers vegetation (<sup><2411></sup>Jeremiah 4:11,12 <sup><4936></sup>Psalm 103:16 <sup><2107></sup>Isaiah 40:7).

**eat up ... pastors** — that is, thy kings (<sup><2108></sup>Jeremiah 2:8). There is a happy play on words. The *pastors*, whose office it is to feed the sheep, shall themselves be *fed on*. They who should *drive* the flock from place to place for pasture shall be *driven* into exile by the Chaldees.

**23. inhabitant of Lebanon** — namely, Jerusalem, whose temple, palaces, and principal habitations were built of cedars of Lebanon.

**how gracious** — irony. How graciously thou wilt be treated by the Chaldees, when they come on thee suddenly, as pangs on a woman in travail (<sup><2163></sup>Jeremiah 6:24)! Nay, all thy fine buildings will win no favor for thee from them. MAURER translates, “How shalt thou be *to be pitied!*”

**24. As I live** — God’s most solemn formula of oath (<sup><2468></sup>Jeremiah 46:18 4:2 <sup><1630></sup>Deuteronomy 32:40 <sup><1253></sup>1 Samuel 25:34).

**Coniah** — Jeconiah or Jehoiachin. The contraction of the name is meant in contempt.

**signet** — Such ring seals were often of the greatest value (So 8:6 <sup><3122></sup>Haggai 2:23). Jehoiachin’s popularity is probably here referred to.

**right hand** — the hand most valued.

**I would pluck thee thence** — (Compare <sup><3100></sup>Obadiah 1:4); on account of thy father’s sins, as well as thine own (<sup><4802></sup>2 Chronicles 36:9). There is a change here, as often in *Hebrew* poetry, from the third to the second person, to bring the threat more directly home to him. After a three months’ and ten days’ reign, the Chaldees deposed him. In Babylon, however, by God’s favor he was ultimately treated more kindly than other royal captives (<sup><2825></sup>Jeremiah 52:31-34). But none of his direct posterity ever came to the throne.

**25. give ... into ... hand** — “I will pluck thee” from “*my right hand,*” and “will give thee *into the hand of them that seek thy life.*”

**26. thy mother** — Nehushta, the queen dowager (<sup><1216></sup>2 Kings 24:6,8,15; see <sup><2438></sup>Jeremiah 13:18).

**27. they** — Coniah and his mother. He passes from the second person (<sup><2523></sup>Jeremiah 22:26) to the third person here, to express alienation. The king is as it were put out of sight, as if unworthy of being spoken with directly.

**desire** — literally, “lift up their soul” (<sup><2444></sup>Jeremiah 44:14 <sup><2241></sup>Psalms 24:4 25:1). Judea was the land which they in Babylon should pine after in vain.

**28. broken idol** — Coniah was idolized once by the Jews; Jeremiah, therefore, in their person, expresses their astonishment at one from whom so much had been expected being now so utterly cast aside.

**vessel ... no pleasure** — (<sup><1812></sup>Psalms 31:12 <sup><3888></sup>Hosea 8:8). The answer to this is given (<sup><6110></sup>Romans 9:20-23; contrast <sup><5121></sup>2 Timothy 2:21).

**his seed** — (See on <sup><1229></sup>Jeremiah 22:29).

**29, 30. *O earth! earth! earth!*** — Jeconiah was not actually without offspring (compare <sup><4228></sup>Jeremiah 22:28, “his seed”; <sup><4387></sup>1 Chronicles 3:17,18 <sup><4012></sup>Matthew 1:12), but he was to be “written childless,” as a warning to posterity, that is, without a lineal heir to his throne. It is with a reference to the *three* kings, Shallum, Jehoiakim, and Jeconiah, that the earth is *thrice* invoked [BENGEL]. Or, the *triple* invocation is to give intensity to the call for attention to the announcement of the end of the royal line, so far as Jehoiachin’s seed is concerned. Though Messiah (<sup><4003></sup>Matthew 1:1-17), the heir of David’s throne, was lineally descended from Jeconiah, it was only through Joseph, who, though His legal, was not His real father. Matthew gives the legal pedigree through *Solomon* down to Joseph; Luke the real pedigree, from Mary, the real parent, through *Nathan*, brother of Solomon, upwards (<sup><4131></sup>Luke 3:31).

***no man of his seed ... upon the throne*** — This explains the sense in which “childless” is used. Though the succession to the throne failed in his line, still the promise to David (<sup><4389></sup>Psalms 89:30-37) was revived in Zerubbabel and consummated in Christ.

# CHAPTER 23

## JEREMIAH 23:1-40.

### THE WICKED RULERS TO BE SUPERSEDED BY THE KING, WHO SHOULD REIGN OVER THE AGAIN UNITED PEOPLES, ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

This forms the *epilogue* to the denunciations of the four kings, in  
<sup><321></sup>Jeremiah 21:1-22:30.

1. *pastors* — Shallum, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah (<sup><340></sup>Ezekiel 34:2).

2. *Ye have not ... visited them ... I will visit upon you* — just retribution. Play upon the double sense of “visit.” “Visit upon,” namely, in wrath (<sup><423></sup>Exodus 32:34).

3, 4. Restoration of Judah from Babylon foretold in language which in its fullness can only apply to the final restoration of *both* “Judah” and “Israel” (compare <sup><426></sup>Jeremiah 23:6); also “out of *all* countries,” in this verse and <sup><428></sup>Jeremiah 23:8; also, “neither shall they be lacking,” that is, none shall be missing or detached from the rest: a prophecy never yet fully accomplished. It holds good also of the spiritual Israel, the elect of both Jews and Gentiles (<sup><418></sup>Malachi 3:16,17 <sup><403></sup>John 10:28 17:12). As to the literal Israel also, see <sup><427></sup>Jeremiah 32:37 <sup><254></sup>Isaiah 54:13 60:21 <sup><264></sup>Ezekiel 34:11-16.

*shepherds ... shall feed them* — (<sup><415></sup>Jeremiah 3:15 <sup><262></sup>Ezekiel 34:23-31). Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Maccabees were but typical of the consummating fulfillment of these prophecies under Messiah.

5. As Messianic prophecy extended over many years in which many political changes took place in harmony with these, it displayed its riches by a variety more effective than if it had been manifested all at once. As the moral condition of the Jews required in each instance, so Messiah was exhibited in a corresponding phase, thus becoming more and more the soul of the nation’s life: so that He is represented as the antitypical Israel (<sup><240></sup>Isaiah 49:3).

*unto David* — HENGSTENBERG observes that Isaiah dwells more on His *prophetical* and *priestly* office, which had already been partly set forth

(<sup><688></sup>Deuteronomy 18:18 <sup><690></sup>Psalms 110:4). Other prophets dwell more on His *kingly* office. Therefore here He is associated with “David” *the king*: but in <sup><230></sup>Isaiah 11:1 with the then poor and unknown “Jesse.”

**righteous Branch** — “the Branch of righteousness” (<sup><265></sup>Jeremiah 33:15); “The Branch” simply (<sup><308></sup>Zechariah 3:8 6:12); “The Branch of the Lord” (<sup><204></sup>Isaiah 4:2).

**prosper** — the very term applied to Messiah’s undertaking (<sup><292></sup>Isaiah 52:13, *Margin*; <sup><250></sup>Isaiah 53:10). *Righteousness* or *justice* is the characteristic of Messiah elsewhere, too, in connection with our *salvation* or *justification* (<sup><251></sup>Isaiah 53:11 <sup><702></sup>Daniel 9:24 <sup><309></sup>Zechariah 9:9). So in the New Testament He is not merely “righteous” Himself, but “righteousness to us” (<sup><403></sup>1 Corinthians 1:30), so that we become “the righteousness of God in Him” (<sup><508></sup>Romans 10:3,4 <sup><759></sup>2 Corinthians 5:19-21 <sup><108></sup>Philippians 3:9).

**execute judgment and justice in the earth** — (<sup><572></sup>Psalms 72:2 <sup><207></sup>Isaiah 9:7 32:1,18). Not merely a spiritual reign in the sense in which He is “our righteousness,” but a righteous reign “in the earth” (<sup><247></sup>Jeremiah 3:17,18). In some passages He is said to come to *judge*, in others to *reign*. In <sup><125></sup>Matthew 25:34, He is called “the King.” <sup><307></sup>Psalms 9:7 unites them. Compare <sup><722></sup>Daniel 7:22,26,27.

**6. Judah ... Israel ... dwell safely** — Compare <sup><236></sup>Jeremiah 33:16, where “Jerusalem” is substituted for “Israel” here. Only *Judah*, and that only in part, has as yet returned. So far are the Jews from having enjoyed, as yet, the temporal blessings here foretold as the result of Messiah’s reign, that their lot has been, for eighteen centuries, worse than ever before. The accomplishment must, therefore, be still future, when both Judah and Israel in their own land shall dwell safely under a Christocracy, far more privileged than even the old theocracy (<sup><237></sup>Jeremiah 32:37 <sup><638></sup>Deuteronomy 33:28 <sup><254></sup>Isaiah 54:1-17 60:1-22 65:17-25 <sup><341></sup>Zechariah 14:11).

**shall be called, the Lord** — that is, shall be (<sup><230></sup>Isaiah 9:6) “Jehovah,” God’s incommunicable name. Though when applied to created things, it expresses only some peculiar *connection* they have with Jehovah (<sup><124></sup>Genesis 22:14 <sup><175></sup>Exodus 17:15), yet when applied to Messiah it must express His *Godhead* manifested in justifying power *towards us* (<sup><586></sup>1 Timothy 3:16).

**our** — marks His *manhood*, which is also implied in His being a *Branch raised unto David*, whence His human title, “Son of David” (compare <sup><122></sup>Matthew 22:42-45).

***Righteousness*** — marks His *Godhead*, for God alone can justify the ungodly (compare <sup><3145></sup>Romans 4:5 <sup><3517></sup>Isaiah 45:17,24,25).

**7, 8.** Repeated from <sup><2164></sup>Jeremiah 16:14,15. The prophet said the same things often, in order that his sayings might make the more impression. The same promise as in <sup><2238></sup>Jeremiah 23:3,4. The wide dispersion of the Jews at the Babylonish captivity prefigures their present wider dispersion (<sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 11:11 <sup><2406></sup>Joel 3:6). Their second deliverance is to exceed far the former one from Egypt. But the deliverance from Babylon was inferior to that from Egypt in respect to the miracles performed and the numbers delivered. The final deliverance under Messiah must, therefore, be meant, of which that from Babylon was the earnest.

**9. *because of the prophets*** — so the Masorites and Targum. But *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, etc., make this the inscription of the prophecy, CONCERNING THE PROPHETS: as in <sup><2440></sup>Jeremiah 46:2 48:1 49:1. Jeremiah expresses his horror at the so-called “prophets” not warning the people, though iniquity so fearfully abounded, soon to be followed by awful judgments.

***bones shake*** — (<sup><2316></sup>Habakkuk 3:16).

***drunken*** — God’s judgments are represented as stupefying like wine. The effects of the Holy Spirit also are compared to those of wine (<sup><4217></sup>Acts 2:17). In both cases ecstasy was produced. This accounts for the denial of wine to those likely to be inspired, Nazarites, etc. (<sup><4215></sup>Luke 1:15). It was necessary to put it out of men’s power to ascribe inspired ecstasy to the effects of wine.

***because of ... words of ... holiness*** — because of Jehovah’s holy words, wherewith He threatened severe penalties, soon to be inflicted, against the breakers of His law.

**10. *adulterers*** — spiritual, that is, forsakers of God, Israel’s true Husband (<sup><2545></sup>Isaiah 54:5) for idols, at the instigation of the false “prophets” (<sup><2239></sup>Jeremiah 23:9,15). *Literal* adultery and fornication, the usual concomitants of idolatry, are also meant.

***swearing*** — MAURER, etc., translate, “Because of the curse (of God on it), the land mourneth” (<sup><1575></sup>Deuteronomy 27:15-26 28:15-68 <sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 24:6). More than usual notoriety had been given to the curses of the law, by the finding and reading of it in Josiah’s time (<sup><4221></sup>2 Kings 22:11, etc.). But <sup><2040></sup>Hosea 4:2,3, favors *English Version* (compare <sup><2424></sup>Jeremiah 12:4). A drought was sent by God on the pastures (“pleasant places,” oases) in the desert, on account of the “profaneness” of the priests, prophets, and people (<sup><2231></sup>Jeremiah 23:11).

**course ... evil** — They (both prophets and people) rush into wickedness (<sup>2307</sup>Jeremiah 23:21 <sup>2307</sup>Isaiah 59:7).

**force ... not right** — Their *powers* are used not on the side of *rectitude*, but on that of falsehood.

**11. profane** — (<sup>2329</sup>Ezekiel 23:39 <sup>2305</sup>Zephaniah 3:4).

**in my house** — (<sup>2409</sup>Jeremiah 7:30). They built altars to idols in the very temple (<sup>12312</sup>2 Kings 23:12 <sup>2408</sup>Ezekiel 8:3-16). Compare as to covetousness under the roof of the sanctuary, <sup>4213</sup>Matthew 21:13 <sup>2416</sup>John 2:16.

**12. slippery ways in ... darkness** — Their “way” is their false doctrine which proves fatal to them (<sup>2436</sup>Jeremiah 13:16 <sup>2389</sup>Psalms 35:6 <sup>2449</sup>Proverbs 4:19).

**I will bring evil ... visitation** — still more calamities than those already inflicted. See on <sup>24123</sup>Jeremiah 11:23; “visitation,” namely, in wrath.

**13. folly** — literally, “insipidity,” “unsavouriness” (<sup>2406</sup>Job 6:6), not having the salt of godliness (<sup>2406</sup>Colossians 4:6).

**in Baal** — in the name of Baal; in connection with his worship (see <sup>2408</sup>Jeremiah 2:8).

**caused ... to err** — (<sup>2396</sup>Isaiah 9:16).

**14.** “Jerusalem” and Judah were even worse than “Samaria” and the ten tribes; the greater were the privileges of the former, the greater was their guilt. They had the temple in their midst, which the ten tribes had not; yet in the temple itself they practiced idolatry.

**strengthen ... hands of evildoers** — (<sup>2332</sup>Ezekiel 13:22).

**as Sodom** — (<sup>2329</sup>Deuteronomy 32:32 <sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 1:10).

**15. gall** — poison (see on <sup>2484</sup>Jeremiah 8:14; <sup>2495</sup>Jeremiah 9:15).

**16. make you vain** — They seduce you to vanity, that is, idolatry, which will prove a vain trust to you (<sup>2415</sup>Jeremiah 2:5 <sup>2715</sup>2 Kings 17:15 <sup>2418</sup>Jon 2:8), [GESENIUS]. Rather, “they delude you with vain promises of security” (<sup>2237</sup>Jeremiah 23:17; compare <sup>2620</sup>Psalms 62:10) [MAURER].

**of their own heart** — of their own invention (<sup>2421</sup>Jeremiah 23:21 <sup>2444</sup>Jeremiah 14:14).

**17. say still** — *Hebrew*, “say in saying,” that is, say *incessantly*.

**peace** — (<sup>2084</sup>Jeremiah 6:14 <sup>2330</sup>Ezekiel 13:10 <sup>2302</sup>Zechariah 10:2).



**imagination** — Hebrew, “obstinacy.”

**no evil** — (<sup><3181></sup>Micah 3:11).

**18.** A reason is given why the false prophets should not be heeded: *They have not stood in the counsels of Jehovah* (an image from ministers present in a *standing* posture at councils of Eastern kings) (compare <sup><2322></sup>Jeremiah 23:22 <sup><3158></sup>Job 15:8). The spiritual man alone has the privilege (<sup><0187></sup>Genesis 18:17 <sup><2514></sup>Psalms 25:14 <sup><3187></sup>Amos 3:7 <sup><3155></sup>John 15:15 <sup><4126></sup>1 Corinthians 2:16).

**19.** So far from all prosperity awaiting the people as the false prophets say (<sup><2317></sup>Jeremiah 23:17), wrath is in store for them.

**grievous** — literally, “eddying,” whirling itself about, a tornado. In <sup><3123></sup>Jeremiah 30:23, “continuing” is substituted for “grievous.”

**fall grievously** — it shall be hurled on.

**20. in ... latter days** — that is, “the year of their visitation” (<sup><2312></sup>Jeremiah 23:12). *Primarily* the meaning is: the Jews will not “consider” now God’s warnings (<sup><3229></sup>Deuteronomy 32:29); but when the prophecies shall be fulfilled in their Babylonish exile, they will consider and see, by bitter experience, their sinful folly. The *ultimate* scope of the prophecy is: the Jews, in their final dispersion, shall at last “consider” their sin and turn to Messiah “perfectly” (<sup><3105></sup>Hosea 3:5 <sup><3115></sup>Zechariah 12:5,10-14 <sup><4135></sup>Luke 13:35).

**21. sent ... spoken** — sent” refers to the primary *call*: “spoken” to the subsequent *charges* given to be executed. A call is required, not only external, on the part of men, but also internal from God, that one should undertake a pastor’s office [CALVIN].

**22. stood in ... counsel** — (<sup><2318></sup>Jeremiah 23:18).

**they should have turned them from their evil way** — They would have given such counsels to the people as would have turned them from their sins (<sup><2315></sup>Jeremiah 25:5 <sup><2511></sup>Isaiah 55:11), and so would have averted punishment. Their not teaching the law in which God’s counsel is set forth proves they are not His prophets, though they boast of being so (<sup><4175></sup>Matthew 7:15-20).

**23.** Let not the false prophets fancy that their devices (<sup><2325></sup>Jeremiah 23:25) are unknown to Me. Are ye so ignorant as to suppose that I can only see things near Me, namely, things in heaven, and not earthly things as being too remote?

**24.** (<sup><3107></sup>Psalms 139:7, etc. <sup><3102></sup>Amos 9:2,3).

**fill heaven and earth** — with My omniscience providence, power, and essential being (<sup><1027></sup>1 Kings 8:27).

**25. dreamed** — I have received a prophetic communication by dream (<sup><0426></sup>Numbers 12:6 <sup><6103></sup>Deuteronomy 13:1, etc. <sup><2128></sup>Joel 2:28).

**26. prophets** — a different *Hebrew* form from the usual one, “prophesiers.” “How long,” cries Jeremiah, impatient of their impious audacity, “shall these *prophecy-mongers* go on prophesying lies?” The answer is given in <sup><2239></sup>Jeremiah 23:29-34.

**27.** They “think” to make My people utterly to forget Me. But I will oppose to those dreamers my true prophets.

**fathers ... for Baal** — (<sup><0787></sup>Judges 3:7 8:33,34).

**28.** God answers the objection which might be stated, “What, then, must we do, when lies are spoken as truths, and prophets oppose prophets?” Do the same as when wheat is mixed with chaff: do not reject the wheat because of the chaff mixed with it, but discriminate between the false and the true revelations. The test is adherence to, or *forgetfulness* of, Me and My law (<sup><2227></sup>Jeremiah 23:27).

**that hath a dream** — that pretends to have a divine communication by dream, let him tell it “faithfully,” that it may be compared with “my word” (<sup><4042></sup>2 Corinthians 4:2). The result will be the former (both the prophets and their fictions) will soon be seen to be *chaff*; the latter (the true prophets and the word of God in their mouth) *wheat* (<sup><1040></sup>Psalms 1:4 <sup><3818></sup>Hosea 13:3).

**29.** As the “fire” consumes the “chaff” (<sup><2238></sup>Jeremiah 23:28), so “My word” will consume the false prophets (<sup><4182></sup>Matthew 3:12 <sup><3042></sup>Hebrews 4:12). “My word” which is “wheat” (<sup><2238></sup>Jeremiah 23:28), that is, food to the true prophet and his hearers, is a consuming “fire,” and a crushing “hammer” (<sup><0144></sup>Matthew 21:44) to false prophets and their followers (<sup><4016></sup>2 Corinthians 2:16). The Word of the false prophets may be known by its promising men *peace* in sin. “My word,” on the contrary, burns and *breaks* the hard-hearted (<sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 20:9). The “hammer” symbolizes destructive power (<sup><2413></sup>Jeremiah 50:23 <sup><6219></sup>Na 2:1, *Margin*).

**30. steal my words** — a twofold plagiarism; one steals from the other, and all steal words from Jehovah’s true prophets, but misapply them (see <sup><2412></sup>Jeremiah 28:2 <sup><6101></sup>John 10:1 <sup><6219></sup>Revelation 22:19).

**31. use** — rather, “take” their tongue: a second class (compare <sup><2230></sup>Jeremiah 23:30) require, in order to bring forth a revelation, nothing more than their *tongues*, wherewith they say, He (Jehovah) saith: they bungle in the very

formula instead of the usual “*Jehovah* saith,” being only able to say “(He) saith.”

**32.** Third class: inventors of lies: the climax, and worst of the three.

***lightness*** — wanton inventions (<sup>3680F</sup>Zephaniah 3:4).

***not profit*** — that is, greatly injure.

**33. *What is the burden*** — play on the double sense of the *Hebrew*: an *oracle* and a *burden*. They scoffingly ask, Has he got any new burden (*burdensome oracle*: for all his prophecies are *disasters*) to announce (<sup>3000</sup>Malachi 1:1)? Jeremiah indignantly repeats their own question, Do you ask, What burden? This, then, it is, “I will forsake you.” My word is burdensome in your eyes, and you long to be rid if it. You shall get your wish. There will be no more prophecy: *I will forsake you*, and that will be a far worse “burden” to you.

**34. *The burden*** — Whoever shall in mockery call the Lord’s word “a burden,” shall be *visited* (*Margin*) in wrath.

**35.** The result of My judgments shall be, ye shall address the prophet more reverentially hereafter, no longer calling his message a *burden*, but a divine *response* or *word*. “What hath the LORD *answered*?”

**36. *every man’s word ... his burden*** — As they mockingly *call* all prophecies *burdens*, as if calamities were the sole subject of prophecy, so it shall prove to them. *God will take them at their own word*.

***living God*** — not lifeless as their dumb idols, ever living so as to be able to punish.

**39. *I will ... forget you*** — just retribution for their *forgetting* Him (<sup>2040F</sup>Hosea 4:6). But God cannot possibly *forget* His children (<sup>2340F</sup>Isaiah 49:15). Rather for “forget” translate, “I will altogether lift you up (like a ‘burden,’ alluding to their mocking term for God’s messages) and cast you off.” God makes their wicked language fall on their own head [CALVIN]. Compare <sup>2420F</sup>Jeremiah 23:36: “every man’s word shall be his burden.”

**40. *not be forgotten*** — If we translate <sup>2430F</sup>Jeremiah 23:39 as *English Version*, the antithesis is, though *I forget you*, your *shame shall not be forgotten*.

# CHAPTER 24

## ◀321▶ JEREMIAH 24:1-10.

### THE RESTORATION OF THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE REFRACTORY PARTY IN JUDEA AND IN EGYPT, REPRESENTED UNDER THE TYPE OF A BASKET OF GOOD, AND ONE OF BAD, FIGS.

1. *Lord showed me* — ▶3100▶ Amos 7:1,4,7 8:1, contains the same formula, with the addition of “thus” prefixed.

*carried ... captive Jeconiah* — (▶3224▶ Jeremiah 22:24 ▶12112▶ 2 Kings 24:12, etc. ▶4830▶ 2 Chronicles 36:10).

*carpenters*, etc. — One thousand artisans were carried to Babylon, both to work for the king there, and to deprive Jerusalem of their services in the event of a future siege (▶12116▶ 2 Kings 24:16).

2. *figs ... first ripe* — the “boccora,” or early fig (see on ▶2304▶ Isaiah 28:4). Baskets of figs used to be offered as first-fruits in the temple. The *good figs* represent Jeconiah and the exiles in Babylon; *the bad*, Zedekiah and the obstinate Jews in Judea. They are called *good* and *bad* respectively, not in an absolute, but a comparative sense, and in reference to the punishment of the latter. This prophecy was designed to encourage the despairing exiles, and to reprove the people at home, who prided themselves as superior to those in Babylon and abused the forbearance of God (compare ▶3623▶ Jeremiah 52:31-34).

5. *acknowledge* — *regard with favor*, like as thou lookest on the good figs favorably.

*for their good* — Their removal to Babylon saved them from the calamities which befell the rest of the nation and led them to repentance there: so God bettered their condition (▶12205▶ 2 Kings 25:27-30). Daniel and Ezekiel were among these captives.

6. (▶31215▶ Jeremiah 12:15).

*not pull ... down ... not pluck ... up* — only partially fulfilled in the restoration from Babylon; antitypically and fully to be fulfilled hereafter (▶3624▶ Jeremiah 32:41 33:7).

7. (<sup>24312</sup>Jeremiah 30:22 31:33 32:38). Their conversion from idolatry to the one true God, through the chastening effect of the Babylonish captivity, is here expressed in language which, in its fullness, applies to the more complete conversion hereafter of the Jews, “with their whole heart” (<sup>24213</sup>Jeremiah 29:13), through the painful discipline of their present dispersion. The source of their conversion is here stated to be *God’s prevenient grace*.

*for they shall return* — Repentance, though not the cause of pardon, is its invariable accompaniment: it is the effect of God’s *giving a heart to know Him*.

8. *in ... Egypt* — Many Jews had fled for refuge to Egypt, which was leagued with Judea against Babylon.

9. *removed*, etc. — (<sup>24154</sup>Jeremiah 15:4). CALVIN translates, “I will give them up to *agitation*, in all,” etc.; This verse quotes the curse (<sup>16325</sup>Deuteronomy 28:25,37). Compare <sup>24218</sup>Jeremiah 29:18,22 <sup>19443</sup>Psalms 44:13,14.

# CHAPTER 25

## JEREMIAH 25:1-38.

### PROPHECY OF THE SEVENTY YEARS CAPTIVITY; AND AFTER THAT THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON, AND OF ALL THE NATIONS THAT OPPRESSED THE JEWS.

1. *fourth year of Jehoiakim* — called the *third* year in <sup>2700f</sup>Daniel 1:1. But probably Jehoiakim was set on the throne by Pharaoh-necho on his return from Carchemish about *July*, whereas Nebuchadnezzar mounted the throne January 21, 604 B.C.; so that Nebuchadnezzar's first year was partly the *third*, partly the *fourth*, of Jehoiakim's. Here first Jeremiah gives specific dates. Nebuchadnezzar had previously entered Judea in the reign of his father Nabopolassar.

3. From the thirteenth year of Josiah, in which Jeremiah began to prophesy (<sup>2400f</sup>Jeremiah 1:1), to the end of Josiah's reign, was nineteen years (<sup>1221f</sup>2 Kings 22:1) of Jehoahaz' reign, with the not quite complete four years of Jehoiakim (<sup>2201f</sup>Jeremiah 25:1), added to the nineteen years, make up twenty-three years in all.

4. *rising early* — (See on <sup>2471f</sup>Jeremiah 7:13). "The prophets" refer to Urijah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, etc. It aggravates their sin, that God sent not merely one but many messengers, and those messengers, prophets; and, that during all those years specified, Jeremiah and his fellow prophets *spared no effort, late and early*.

5. *Turn ... dwell* — In *Hebrew* there is expressed by sameness of sounds the correspondence between their *turning* to God and God's turning to them to permit them to *dwell* in their land: *Shubu ... shebu*, "Return" ... so shall ye "*remain*."

*every one from ... evil* — *Each must* separately repent and turn from *his* own sin. None is excepted, lest they should think their guilt extenuated because the evil is general.

6. He instances one sin, idolatry, as representative of all their sins; as nothing is dearer to God than a pure worship of Himself.

7. Though ye provoke *Me* to anger (<sup><6321></sup>Deuteronomy 32:21), yet it is not I, but *yourselves*, whom ye thereby hurt (<sup><1089></sup>Proverbs 8:36 20:2).

9. *the north* — (see on <sup><314></sup>Jeremiah 1:14,15). The Medes and other northern peoples, confederate with Babylon, are included with the Chaldeans.

*my servant* — My agent for punishing (<sup><276></sup>Jeremiah 27:6 43:10; compare <sup><346></sup>Jeremiah 40:2). Compare <sup><248></sup>Isaiah 44:28; Cyrus, “My shepherd.” God makes even unbelievers unconsciously to fulfill His designs. A reproof to the Jews, who boasted that they were the *servants of God*; yet a heathen king is to be more the servant of God than they, and that as the agent of their punishment.

10. (<sup><37></sup>Jeremiah 7:34 <sup><682></sup>Revelation 18:23). The land shall be so desolated that even in the houses left standing there shall be no inhabitant; a terrible stillness shall prevail; no sound of the *hand-mill* (two circular stones, one above the other, for grinding corn, worked by two women, <sup><216></sup>Exodus 11:5 <sup><124></sup>Matthew 24:41; in daily use in every house, and therefore forbidden to be taken in pledge, <sup><546></sup>Deuteronomy 24:6); no *night-light*, so universal in the East that the poorest house has it, burning all night.

*candle* — lamp (<sup><3217></sup>Job 21:17 18:6).

11. *seventy years* — (<sup><277></sup>Jeremiah 27:7). The exact number of years of Sabbaths in four hundred ninety years, the period from Saul to the Babylonian captivity; righteous retribution for their violation of the Sabbath (<sup><854></sup>Leviticus 26:34,35 <sup><462></sup>2 Chronicles 36:21). The seventy years probably begin from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Jerusalem was first captured, and many captives, as well as the treasures of the temple, were carried away; they end with the first year of Cyrus, who, on taking Babylon, issued an edict for the restoration of the Jews (<sup><500></sup>Ezra 1:1). Daniel’s *seventy prophetic weeks* are based on the seventy years of the captivity (compare <sup><206></sup>Daniel 9:2,24).

13. *all ... written in this book, which Jeremiah ... prophesied against all ... nations* — It follows from this, that the prophecies against foreign nations (forty-sixth through fifty-first chapters) must have been already written. Hence the *Septuagint* inserts here those prophecies. But if they had followed immediately (<sup><253></sup>Jeremiah 25:13), there would have been no propriety in the observation in the verse. The very wording of the reference shows that they existed in some other part of the book, and not in the immediate context. It was in this very year, the fourth of Jehoiakim (<sup><260></sup>Jeremiah 36:1,2), that Jeremiah was directed to write in a regular *book* for the first time all that he had prophesied against Judah and *foreign*

“*nations*” from the beginning of his ministry. Probably, at a subsequent time, when he completed the whole work, including the forty-sixth through fifty-first chapters, Jeremiah himself inserted the clause, “all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.” The prophecies in question may have been repeated, as others in Jeremiah, more than once; so in the original smaller collection they may have stood in an earlier position; and, in the fuller subsequent collection, in their later and present position.

**14. *serve themselves*** — (<sup><2070></sup>Jeremiah 27:7 30:8 34:10). Avail themselves of their services as slaves.

***them also*** — the Chaldees, who heretofore have made other nations their slaves, shall *themselves also* in their turn be slaves to them. MAURER translates, “shall impose servitude *on them, even them.*”

***recompense them*** — namely, the Chaldees and other nations against whom Jeremiah had prophesied (<sup><2513></sup>Jeremiah 25:13), as having oppressed the Jews.

***their deeds*** — rather, “deed,” namely, their bad treatment of the Jews (<sup><2819></sup>Jeremiah 50:29 51:6,24; compare <sup><4817></sup>2 Chronicles 36:17).

**15. *wine cup*** — Compare <sup><3112></sup>Jeremiah 13:12,13, as to this image, to express *stupefying judgments*; also <sup><3412></sup>Jeremiah 49:12 51:7. Jeremiah often embodies the imagery of Isaiah in his prophecies (<sup><2021></sup>Lamentations 4:21 <sup><2517></sup>Isaiah 51:17-22 <sup><6169></sup>Revelation 16:19 18:6). The wine cup was not literally given by Jeremiah to the representatives of the different nations; but only in symbolical vision.

**16. *be moved*** — reel (Na 3:11).

**18. *Jerusalem*** — put first: for “judgment begins at the house of God”; they being most guilty whose religious privileges are greatest (<sup><4017></sup>1 Peter 4:17).

***kings*** — Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah.

***as it is this day*** — The accomplishment of the curse had already begun under Jehoiakim. This clause, however, may have been inserted by Jeremiah at his final revision of his prophecies in Egypt.

**19. *Pharaoh*** — put next after Jerusalem, because the Jews had relied most on him, and Egypt and Judea stood on a common footing (<sup><2412></sup>Jeremiah 46:2,25).



**20. *mingled people*** — mercenary foreign troops serving under Pharaoh-hophra in the time of Jeremiah. The employment of these foreigners provoked the native Egyptians to overthrow him. Psammetichus, father of Pharaoh-necho, also had given a settlement in Egypt to Ionian and Carian adventurers [HERODOTUS, 2.152, 154]. See on <sup>2818</sup>Jeremiah 50:37; <sup>2892</sup>Isaiah 19:2,3 20:1 <sup>2615</sup>Ezekiel 30:5. The term is first found in <sup>1023</sup>Exodus 12:38.

**Uz** — in the geographical order here, between Egypt and the states along the Mediterranean; therefore not the “Uz” of <sup>3801</sup>Job 1:1 (north of Arabia-Deserta), but the northern part of Arabia-Petraea, between the sea and Idumea (<sup>2922</sup>Lamentations 4:21; see <sup>1033</sup>Genesis 36:20,28).

***remnant of Ashdod*** — called a “remnant,” because Ashdod had lost most of its inhabitants in the twenty-nine years siege by Psammetichus. Compare also see on <sup>2301</sup>Isaiah 20:1. Gath is not mentioned because it was overthrown in the same war.

**21. *Edom ... Moab ... Ammon*** — joined together, as being related to Israel (see <sup>2481</sup>Jeremiah 48:1-49:39).

**22. *all the kings of Tyrus*** — the petty kings of the various dependencies of Tyre.

***isles*** — a term including all *maritime regions* (<sup>1920</sup>Psalms 72:10).

**23. *Dedan*** — north of Arabia (<sup>1028</sup>Genesis 25:3,4).

***Tema ... Buz*** — neighboring tribes north of Arabia (<sup>832</sup>Job 32:2).

***all ... in ... utmost corners*** — rather, “having the hair cut in angles,” a heathenish custom (see on <sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 9:26).

**24. *mingled people*** — not in the same sense as in <sup>2051</sup>Jeremiah 25:20; the “motley crowd,” so called in contempt (compare <sup>2448</sup>Jeremiah 49:28,31 50:37). By a different pointing it may be translated the “Arabs”; but the repetition of the name is not likely. BLANEY thinks there were two divisions of what we call Arabia, the west (*Araba*) and the east. The west included Arabia-Petraea and the parts on the sea bordering on Egypt, the land of Cush; the east, Arabia-Felix and Deserta. The latter are “the mixed race” inhabiting the desert.

**25. *Zimri*** — perhaps the *Zabra* mentioned by PTOLEMY between Mecca and Medina. *Zimran* also, as Dedan, was one of Abraham’s sons by Keturah (<sup>1022</sup>Genesis 25:2).

***Elam*** — properly, west of Persia; but used for Persia in general.

**26. *Sheshach*** — Babylon; as the parallelism in <sup><2643></sup>Jeremiah 51:41 proves. In the Cabalistic system (called *Athbash*, the first *Hebrew* letter in the alphabet being expressed by the last) *Sheshach* would exactly answer to *Babel*. *Jeremiah* may have used this system (as perhaps in <sup><2644></sup>Jeremiah 51:41) for concealment at the time of this prediction, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, while Nebuchadnezzar was before Jerusalem. In <sup><2644></sup>Jeremiah 51:41 there can be no concealment, as Babylon is expressly mentioned. MICHAELIS more simply explains the term “brazen-gated” (compare <sup><2645></sup>Isaiah 45:2); others, “the house of a prince.” Rather, it comes from the Babylonian goddess, *Shach*, by reduplication of the first letter; from her *Misael* was named *Meshach* by the Babylonians. The term *Shace* was applied to a festival at Babylon, alluded to in <sup><2646></sup>Jeremiah 51:39,57 <sup><2647></sup>Isaiah 21:5. It was during this feast that Cyrus took Babylon [HERODOTUS, 1]. Thus *Jeremiah* mystically denotes the time of its capture by this term [GLASSIUS].

**27. *rise no more*** — The heathen nations in question should fall to rise no more. The Jews should fall but for a time, and then rise again. Therefore, the epithet is given, “the God of *Israel*.”

**28. *if they refuse to take the cup*** — No effort of theirs to escape destruction will avail.

**29.** If I spared not Mine elect people on account of sin, much less will I spare you (<sup><2648></sup>Ezekiel 9:6 <sup><2649></sup>Obadiah 1:16 <sup><2650></sup>Luke 23:31 <sup><2651></sup>1 Peter 4:17).

***be unpunished*** — “be treated as innocent.”

**30. *roar*** — image from a destructive lion (<sup><2652></sup>Isaiah 42:13 <sup><2653></sup>Joel 3:16).

***upon his habitation*** — rather, “His pasturage”; keeping up the image of a lion roaring against the flock in the pasture. The roar was first to go forth over Judea wherein were “the sheep of His pasture” (<sup><2654></sup>Psalms 100:3), and thence into heathen lands.

***shout ... tread ... grapes*** — (<sup><2655></sup>Jeremiah 48:33 <sup><2656></sup>Isaiah 16:9,10).

**31. *controversy*** — cause at issue (<sup><2657></sup>Micah 6:2).

***plead with all flesh*** — (<sup><2658></sup>Isaiah 66:16). God shows the whole world that He does what is altogether just in punishing.

**32. *from the coasts*** — rather, “from the uttermost regions.” Like a storm which arises in one region and then diffuses itself far and wide, so God’s judgments shall pass “from nation to nation,” till all has been fulfilled; no distance shall prevent the fulfillment.

**not be lamented** — (<sup>2464</sup>Jeremiah 16:4,6).

**neither gathered** — to their fathers, in their ancestral tombs (<sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 8:2).

**dung** — (<sup>2830</sup>Psalms 83:10).

**34. shepherds** — princes (<sup>2422</sup>Jeremiah 22:22). Here he returns to *the Jews* and their rulers, using the same image as in <sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 25:30, “pasture” (see on <sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 25:30).

**wallow yourselves** — Cover yourselves as thickly with ashes, in token of sorrow, as one who rolls in them (<sup>2463</sup>Jeremiah 6:26 <sup>2473</sup>Ezekiel 27:30) [MAURER].

**principal** — leaders. The *Septuagint* translates “rams,” carrying out the image (compare <sup>2340</sup>Isaiah 14:9, *Margin*; <sup>3102</sup>Zechariah 10:3).

**days of your slaughter ... of ... dispersions** — rather, “your days *for* slaughter (that is, the time of your being slain), and your dispersions (not ‘of your dispersions’), are accomplished (are come).”

**pleasant vessel** — Ye were once a *precious vessel*, but ye shall *fall*, and so be a *broken vessel* (see on <sup>2423</sup>Jeremiah 22:28). “Your past excellency shall not render you safe now. I will turn to your ignominy whatever glory I conferred on you” [CALVIN].

**35.** Literally, “Flight shall fail the shepherds ... escaping (shall fail) the principal,” etc. (<sup>3124</sup>Amos 2:14). The leaders will be the first objects for slaughter; escape by flight will be out of their power.

**37. habitations** — rather, carrying out the image “pastures” (see on <sup>2453</sup>Jeremiah 25:30). The pasturages where, *peaceably* and without incursion of wild beasts, the flocks have fed, shall be destroyed; that is, the regions where, heretofore, there was *peace* and security (alluding to the name *Salem*, or Jerusalem, “possessing *peace*”).

**38. his covert** — the temple, where heretofore, like a lion, as its defender, by the mere terror of His voice He warded off the foe; but now He leaves it a prey to the Gentiles [CALVIN].

**fierceness of ... oppressor** — rather, as the *Hebrew*, for “oppressor” is an adjective *feminine*, the word “sword” is understood, which, in <sup>2416</sup>Jeremiah 46:16 50:16, is expressed (indeed, some manuscripts and the *Septuagint* read “sword” instead of “fierceness” here; probably interpolated from <sup>2416</sup>Jeremiah 46:16), “*the oppressing sword*.” The *Hebrew* for “oppressing” means also a “dove”: there may be, therefore, a covert

allusion to the Chaldean standard bearing a dove on it, in honor of Semiramis, the first queen, said in popular superstition to have been nourished by doves when exposed at birth, and at death to have been transformed into a dove. Her name may come from a root referring to the *cooing* of a dove. That bird was held sacred to the goddess Venus. *Vulgate* so translates “the anger of *the dove*.”

***his ... anger*** — If the anger of Nebuchadnezzar cannot be evaded, how much less that of God (compare ~~25:37~~ Jeremiah 25:37)!

# CHAPTER 26

## ◀201▶ JEREMIAH 26:1-24.

### JEREMIAH DECLARED WORTHY OF DEATH, BUT BY THE INTERPOSITION OF AHIKAM SAVED; THE SIMILAR CASES OF MICAH AND URIJAH BEING ADDUCED IN THE PROPHET'S FAVOR.

The prophecies which gave the offense were those given in detail in the seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters (compare ▶201▶ Jeremiah 26:6 here with ▶317▶ Jeremiah 7:12,14); and summarily referred to here [MAURER], probably pronounced at one of the great feasts (that of tabernacles, according to USSHER; for the inhabitants of “all the cities of Judah” are represented as present, ▶201▶ Jeremiah 26:2). See on ▶201▶ Jeremiah 7:1.

**2. *in the court*** — the largest court, from which he could be heard by the whole people.

***come to worship*** — *Worship* is vain without *obedience* (▶095▶ 1 Samuel 15:21,22).

***all the words*** — (▶268▶ Ezekiel 3:10).

***diminish not a word*** — (▶094▶ Deuteronomy 4:2 12:32 ▶281▶ Proverbs 30:6 ▶407▶ Acts 20:27 ▶407▶ 2 Corinthians 2:17 4:2 ▶629▶ Revelation 22:19). Not suppressing or softening aught for fear of giving offense; nor setting forth coldly and indirectly what can only by forcible statement do good.

**3. *if so be*** — expressed according to human conceptions; not as if God did not foreknow all contingencies, but to mark the obstinacy of the people and the difficulty of healing them; and to show His own goodness in making the offer which left them without excuse [CALVIN].

**5. *prophets*** — the inspired interpreters of the *law* (▶201▶ Jeremiah 26:4), who adapted it to the use of the people.

**6. *like Shiloh*** — (see on ▶317▶ Jeremiah 7:12; ▶317▶ Jeremiah 7:14 ▶094▶ 1 Samuel 4:10-12 ▶386▶ Psalm 78:60).

***curse*** — (▶201▶ Jeremiah 24:9 ▶265▶ Isaiah 65:15).

**8. *priests*** — The captain (or prefect) of the temple had the power of apprehending offenders in the temple with the sanction of the priests.

***prophets*** — the false prophets. The charge against Jeremiah was that of uttering falsehood in Jehovah's name, an act punishable with death (<sup><6880></sup>Deuteronomy 18:20). His prophecy against the temple and city (<sup><2011></sup>Jeremiah 26:11) might speciously be represented as contradicting God's own words (<sup><9214></sup>Psalms 132:14). Compare the similar charge against Stephen (<sup><4163></sup>Acts 6:13,14).

**10. *princes*** — members of the Council of State or Great Council, which took cognizance of such offenses.

***heard*** — the clamor of the popular tumult.

***came up*** — from the king's house to the temple, which stood higher than the palace.

***sat*** — as judges, in the gate, the usual place of trying such cases.

***new gate*** — originally built by Jotham ("the higher gate," <sup><2155></sup>2 Kings 15:35) and now recently restored.

**12. *Lord sent me*** — a valid justification against any laws alleged against him.

***against ... against*** — rather, "concerning." Jeremiah purposely avoids saying, "against," which would needlessly irritate. They had used the same Hebrew word (<sup><2011></sup>Jeremiah 26:11), which ought to be translated "concerning," though they meant it in the unfavorable sense. Jeremiah takes up their word in a better sense, implying that there is still room for repentance: that his prophecies aim at the real good of the city; *for or concerning* this house ... city [GROTIUS].

**13.** (<sup><2018></sup>Jeremiah 26:3,19).

**14.** Jeremiah's humility is herein shown, and submission to the powers that be (<sup><5111></sup>Romans 13:1).

**15. *bring ... upon yourselves*** — So far will you be from escaping the predicted evils by shedding my blood, that you will, by that very act, only incur heavier penalties (<sup><4235></sup>Matthew 23:35).

**16. *princes ... all the people*** — The fickle people, as they were previously influenced by the priests to clamor for his death (<sup><2018></sup>Jeremiah 26:8), so now under the princes' influence require that he shall not be put to death. Compare as to Jesus, Jeremiah's antitype, the hosannas of the multitude a

few days before the same people, persuaded by the priests as in this case, cried, Away with Him, crucify Him (<sup>4100F</sup>Matthew 21:1-11 27:20-25). The priests, through envy of his holy zeal, were more his enemies than the princes, whose office was more secular than religious. A prophet could not legally be put to death unless he prophesied *in the name of other gods* (therefore, they say, “in the name of the Lord”), or after his prophecy had failed in its accomplishment. Meanwhile, if he foretold calamity, he might be imprisoned. Compare Micaiah’s case (<sup>4120F</sup>1 Kings 22:1-28).

17. Compare Gamaliel’s interposition (<sup>4465F</sup>Acts 5:34, etc.).

**elders** — some of the “princes” mentioned (<sup>4306F</sup>Jeremiah 26:16) those whose age, as well as dignity, would give weight to the precedents of past times which they adduce.

18. (<sup>4302F</sup>Micah 3:12).

**Morasthite** — called so from a village of the tribe Judah.

**Hezekiah** — The precedent in the reign of such a good king proved that Jeremiah was not the only prophet, or the first, who threatened the city and the temple without incurring death.

**mountain of the house** — Moriah, on which stood the temple (peculiarly called “*the house*”) shall be covered with woods instead of buildings. Jeremiah, in quoting previous prophecies, never does so without alteration; he adapts the language to his own style, showing thereby his authority in his treatment of Scripture, as being himself inspired.

19. Hezekiah, so far from killing him, was led “to fear the Lord,” and pray for remission of the sentence against Judah (<sup>4426F</sup>2 Chronicles 32:26).

**Lord repented** — (<sup>4024F</sup>Exodus 32:14 <sup>4104F</sup>2 Samuel 24:16).

**Thus** — if we kill Jeremiah.

20. As the flight and capture of Urijah must have occupied some time, “the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim” (<sup>4301F</sup>Jeremiah 26:1) must not mean the *very* beginning, but the second or third year of his eleven years’ reign.

**And ... also** — perhaps connected with <sup>4304F</sup>Jeremiah 26:24, as the comment of the writer, not the continuation of the speech of the elders: “And although *also* a man that prophesied ... Urijah ... (proving how great was the danger in which Jeremiah stood, and how wonderful the providence of God in preserving him), *nevertheless* the hand of Ahikam,” etc.

[GLASSIUS]. The context, however, implies rather that the words are the continuation of the previous speech of the elders. They adduce another

instance besides that of Micah, though of a different kind, namely, that of Urijah: he suffered for his prophecies, but they *imply*, though they do not venture to *express* it, that thereby sin has been added to sin, and that it has done no good to Jehoiakim, for that the notorious condition of the state at this time shows that a heavier vengeance is impending if they persevere in such acts of violence [CALVIN].

**22. *Jehoiakim sent ... into Egypt*** — He had been put on the throne by Pharaoh of Egypt (<sup>42784</sup>2 Kings 23:34). This explains the readiness with which he got the Egyptians to give up Urijah to him, when that prophet had sought an asylum in Egypt. Urijah was faithful in delivering his message, but faulty in leaving his work, so God permitted him to lose his life, while Jeremiah was protected in danger. The path of duty is often the path of safety.

**23. *graves of the common people*** — literally, “sons of the people” (compare <sup>42316</sup>2 Kings 23:6). The prophets seem to have had a separate cemetery (<sup>41039</sup>Matthew 23:29). Urijah’s corpse was denied this honor, in order that he should not be regarded as a true prophet.

**24. *Ahikam*** — son of Shaphan the scribe, or royal secretary. He was one of those whom King Josiah, when struck by the words of the book of the law, sent to inquire of the Lord (<sup>41221</sup>2 Kings 22:12,14). Hence his interference here in behalf of Jeremiah is what we should expect from his past association with that good king. His son, Gedaliah, followed in his father’s steps, so that he was chosen by the Babylonians as the one to whom they committed Jeremiah for safety after taking Jerusalem, and on whose loyalty they could depend in setting him over the remnant of the people in Judea (<sup>38914</sup>Jeremiah 39:14 <sup>42522</sup>2 Kings 25:22).

***people to put him to death*** — Princes often, when they want to destroy a good man, prefer it to be done by a popular tumult rather than by their own order, so as to reap the fruit of the crime without odium to themselves (<sup>41221</sup>Matthew 27:20).



# CHAPTER 27

## JEREMIAH 27:1-22.

### THE FUTILITY OF RESISTING NEBUCHADNEZZAR ILLUSTRATED TO THE AMBASSADORS OF THE KING, DESIRING TO HAVE THE KING OF JUDAH CONFEDERATE WITH THEM, UNDER THE TYPE OF YOKES. JEREMIAH EXHORTS THEM AND ZEDEKIAH TO YIELD.

1. **Jehoiakim** — The prophecy that follows was according to this reading given in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, fifteen years before it was published in the reign of Zedekiah to whom it refers; it was thus long deposited in the prophet's bosom, in order that by it he might be supported under trials in his prophetic career in the interim [CALVIN]. But "Zedekiah" *may be* the true reading. So the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions*. <sup><277></sup>Jeremiah 27:3,12 <sup><281></sup>Jeremiah 28:1, confirm this; also, one of KENNICOTT'S manuscripts. The *English Version* reading *may* have originated from <sup><261></sup>Jeremiah 26:1. "Son of Josiah" applies to Zedekiah as truly as to "Jehoiakim" or "Eliakim." The *fourth year* may, in a general sense here, as in <sup><281></sup>Jeremiah 28:1, be called "the beginning of his reign," as it lasted eleven years (<sup><1218></sup>2 Kings 24:18). It was not long after the fourth year of his reign that he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><2519></sup>Jeremiah 51:59 52:3 <sup><1219></sup>2 Kings 24:20), in violation of an oath before God (<sup><14613></sup>2 Chronicles 36:13).

2. **bonds** — by which the yoke is made fast to the neck (<sup><2155></sup>Jeremiah 5:5).

**yokes** — literally, the carved piece of wood attached at both ends to the two yokes on the necks of a pair of oxen, so as to connect them. Here the *yoke* itself. The *plural* is used, as he was to wear one himself, and give the others to the ambassadors; (<sup><277></sup>Jeremiah 27:3 28:10,12) proves that the symbolical act was in this instance (though not in others, <sup><2515></sup>Jeremiah 25:15) actually done (compare <sup><2111></sup>Isaiah 20:2, etc. <sup><3121></sup>Ezekiel 12:3,11,18).

3. **And send them to the king of Edom**, etc. — Appropriate symbol, as these ambassadors had come to Jerusalem to consult as to shaking off the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. According to PHERECYDES in CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 567], Idanthura, king of the Scythians, intimated to Darius, who had crossed the Danube, that he would lead an army against him, by sending him, instead of a letter, *a mouse, a frog, a*

*bird, an arrow, and a plough.* The task assigned to Jeremiah required great faith, as it was sure to provoke alike his own countrymen and the foreign ambassadors and their kings, by a seeming insult, at the very time that all were full of confident hopes grounded on the confederacy.

5. God here, as elsewhere, connects with the symbol doctrine, which is as it were its soul, without which it would be not only cold and frivolous, but even dead [CALVIN]. God's mention of His supreme power is in order to refute the pride of those who rely on their own power (<sup>236D</sup>Isaiah 45:12).

*given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me* — (<sup>485E</sup>Psalm 115:15,16 <sup>2047</sup>Daniel 4:17,25,32). Not for his merits, but of My own sole good pleasure [ESTIUS].

6. *beasts of the field* — not merely the horses to carry his Chaldean soldiers, and oxen to draw his provisions [GROTIUS]; not merely the deserts, mountains, and woods, the haunts of wild beasts, implying his unlimited extent of empire [ESTIUS]; but the beasts themselves by a mysterious instinct of nature. A reproof to men that they did not recognize God's will, which the very beasts acknowledged (compare <sup>2100B</sup>Isaiah 1:3). As the beasts are to submit to Christ, the Restorer of the dominion over nature, lost by the first Adam (compare <sup>4002A</sup>Genesis 1:28 2:19,20 <sup>4980B</sup>Psalm 8:6-8), so they were appointed to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, the representative of the world power and prefigurer of Antichrist; this universal power was suffered to be held by him to show the unfitness of any to wield it “until He come whose right it is” (<sup>3217</sup>Ezekiel 21:27).

7. *son ... son's son* — (<sup>483D</sup>2 Chronicles 36:20). Nebuchadnezzar had *four* successors — Evil-merodach, his *son*; Neriglissar, husband of Nebuchadnezzar's daughter; his son, Labosodarchod; and Naboned (with whom his son, Belshazzar, was joint king), *son* of Evil-merodach. But Neriglissar and Labosodarchod were not in the *direct male line*; so that the prophecy held good to “his son and his son's son,” and the intermediate two are omitted.

*time of his land* — that is, of its subjugation or its being “visited” in wrath (<sup>3072</sup>Jeremiah 27:22 <sup>22512</sup>Jeremiah 25:12 29:10 50:27 <sup>2163B</sup>Daniel 5:26).

*serve themselves of him* — make him their servant (<sup>22514</sup>Jeremiah 25:14 <sup>2362</sup>Isaiah 13:22). So “his day” for the destined day of his calamity (<sup>4883D</sup>Job 18:20).

8. *until I have consumed them by his hand* — until by these consuming visitations I have brought them under his power.

9. *ye* — the Jews especially, for whom the address to the rest was intended.

**enchanters** — augurs [CALVIN], from a root, the “eyes,” that is, lookers at the stars and other means of taking omens of futurity; or another root, a “fixed time,” observers of times: forbidden in the law (<sup><1892></sup>Leviticus 19:26 <sup><1518></sup>Deuteronomy 18:10,11,14).

**10. to remove you** — expressing the *event* which would result. The very thing they profess by their enchantments to avert, they are by them bringing on you. Better to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, and remain in your land, than to rebel, and be removed from it.

**11. serve ... till it** — The same *Hebrew* root expresses “serve” and “till,” or “cultivate.” *Serve* ye the king of Babylon, and the land will *serve* you [CALVIN].

**12. I spake also** — translate, “And I spake,” etc. Special application of the subject to Zedekiah.

**13. Why ... die** — by running on your own ruin in resisting Nebuchadnezzar after this warning (<sup><2681></sup>Ezekiel 18:31).

**14. lie** — (<sup><2444></sup>Jeremiah 14:14).

**15. in my name** — The devil often makes *God's name* the plea for lies (<sup><4048></sup>Matthew 4:6 7:22,23 <sup><2775></sup>Jeremiah 27:15-20, the test whereby to know false prophets).

**16.** The “vessels” had been carried away to Babylon in the reign of Jeconiah (<sup><1243></sup>2 Kings 24:13); also previously in that of Jehoiakim (<sup><4815></sup>2 Chronicles 36:5-7).

**18. at Jerusalem** — that is, in other houses containing such vessels, besides the house of God and the king's palace. Nebuzara-dan, captain of the guard under Nebuchadnezzar, carried all away (<sup><1253></sup>2 Kings 25:13-17 <sup><4838></sup>2 Chronicles 36:18). The more costly vessels had been previously removed in the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah.

**19.** (<sup><2527></sup>Jeremiah 52:17,20,21).

**22. until ... I visit them** — in wrath by Cyrus (<sup><2835></sup>Jeremiah 32:5). In seventy years from the first carrying away of captives in Jehoiachin's reign (<sup><2490></sup>Jeremiah 29:10 <sup><4821></sup>2 Chronicles 36:21).

**restore them** — by the hand of Cyrus (<sup><1500></sup>Ezra 1:7). By Artaxerxes (<sup><1579></sup>Ezra 7:19).

# CHAPTER 28

## JEREMIAH 28:1-17.

**PROPHECIES IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THOSE IN THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CHAPTER. HANANIAH BREAKS THE YOKES TO SIGNIFY THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S YOKE SHALL BE BROKEN. JEREMIAH FORETELLS THAT YOKES OF IRON ARE TO SUCCEED THOSE OF WOOD, AND THAT HANANIAH SHALL DIE.**

**1. *in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah*** — The Jews often divided any period into two halves, *the beginning* and *the end*. As Zedekiah reigned eleven years, the fourth year would be called the *beginning* of his reign, especially as during the first three years affairs were in such a disturbed state that he had little power or dignity, being a tributary; but in the fourth year he became strong in power.

***Hananiah*** — Another of this name was one of the three godly youths who braved Nebuchadnezzar's wrath in the fear of God (<sup>2700B</sup>Daniel 1:6,7 3:12). Probably a near relation, for *Azariah* is associated with him; as *Azur* with the Hananiah here. The godly and ungodly are often in the same family (<sup>3384E</sup>Ezekiel 18:14-20).

***Gibeon*** — one of the cities of the priests, to which order he must have belonged.

**2. *broken the yoke*** — *I have determined to break*: referring to Jeremiah's prophecy (<sup>2972</sup>Jeremiah 27:12).

**3. *two full years*** — literally, "years of days." So "a month of days," that is, all its days complete (<sup>0294</sup>Genesis 29:14, *Margin*; <sup>0440</sup>Genesis 41:1). It was marvellous presumption to speak so definitely without having any divine revelation.

**4. *bring again ... Jeconiah*** — not *necessarily* implying that Hananiah wished Zedekiah to be superseded by Jeconiah. The main point intended was that the restoration from Babylon should be complete. But, doubtless, the false prophet foretold Jeconiah's return (<sup>1242</sup>2 Kings 24:12-15), to ingratiate himself with the populace, with whom Jeconiah was a favorite (see on <sup>3023</sup>Jeremiah 22:24).

**5. *the prophet Jeremiah*** — the epithet, “*the prophet*,” is prefixed to “Jeremiah” throughout this chapter, to correspond to the same epithet before “Hananiah”; except in <sup><482></sup>Jeremiah 28:12, where “the prophet” has been inserted in *English Version*. The rival claims of the true and the false prophet are thus put in the more prominent contrast.

**6. *Amen*** — Jeremiah prays *for* the people, though constrained to prophesy against them (<sup><103></sup>1 Kings 1:36). The *event* was the appointed test between contradictory predictions (<sup><682></sup>Deuteronomy 18:21,22). “Would that what you say were true!” I prefer the safety of my country even to my own estimation. The prophets had no pleasure in announcing God’s judgment, but did so as a matter of stern duty, not thereby divesting themselves of their natural feelings of sorrow for their country’s woe. Compare <sup><123></sup>Exodus 32:32 <sup><818></sup>Romans 9:3, as instances of how God’s servants, intent only on the glory of God and the salvation of the country, forgot self and uttered wishes in a state of feeling transported out of themselves. So Jeremiah wished not to diminish aught from the word of God, though as a Jew he uttered the wish for his people [CALVIN].

**8. *prophets ... before me*** — Hosea, Joel, Amos, and others.

***evil*** — a few manuscripts, read “*famine*,” which is more usually associated with the specification of *war* and *pestilence* (<sup><245></sup>Jeremiah 15:2 18:21 27:8,13). But *evil* here includes *all* the calamities flowing from *war*, not merely *famine*, but also *desolation*, etc. *Evil*, being the more difficult reading, is less likely to be the interpolated one than *famine*, which probably originated in copying the parallel passages.

**9. *peace*** — Hananiah had given no warning as to the need of conversion, but had foretold *prosperity* unconditionally. Jeremiah does not say that all are true prophets who foretell truths in any instance (which <sup><634></sup>Deuteronomy 13:1,2, disproves); but asserts only the converse, namely, that whoever, as Hananiah, predicts what the event does not confirm, is a false prophet. There are two tests of prophets:

(1) The event, <sup><682></sup>Deuteronomy 18:22.

(2) The word of God, <sup><2181></sup>Isaiah 8:20.

**10. *the yoke*** — (<sup><272></sup>Jeremiah 27:2). Impious audacity to break what God had appointed as a solemn pledge of the fulfillment of His word. Hence Jeremiah deigns no reply (<sup><818></sup>Jeremiah 28:11 <sup><1006></sup>Matthew 7:6).

**11. *neck of all nations*** — opposed to <sup><272></sup>Jeremiah 27:7.

**13. *Thou hast broken ... wood ... thou shalt make ... iron*** — Not here, “*Thou hast broken ... wood*,” and “*I will make ... iron*” (compare <sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 28:16). The same false prophets who, by urging the Jews to rebel, had caused them to throw off the then comparatively *easy* yoke of Babylon, thereby brought on them a *more severe* yoke imposed by that city. “Yokes of iron,” alluding to <sup>6348</sup>Deuteronomy 28:48. It is better to take up a light cross in our way, than to pull a heavier one on our own heads. We may escape destroying providences by submitting to humbling providences. So, spiritually, contrast the “easy yoke” of Christ with the “yoke of bondage” of the law (<sup>4150</sup>Acts 15:10 <sup>881</sup>Galatians 5:1).

**14. *I have put*** — Though Hananiah and those like him were secondary instruments in bringing the iron yoke on Judea, *God* was the great First Cause (<sup>2704</sup>Jeremiah 27:4-7).

**15. *makest ... trust in a lie*** — (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 29:31 <sup>3632</sup>Ezekiel 13:22).

**16. *this year ... die*** — The prediction was uttered in the *fifth* month (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 28:1); Hananiah’s death took place in the *seventh* month, that is, within *two months* after the prediction, answering with awful significance to the *two years* in which Hananiah had foretold that the yoke imposed by Babylon would end.

***rebellion*** — opposition to God’s plain direction, that all should submit to Babylon (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 29:32).

# CHAPTER 29

## ◀29▶ JEREMIAH 29:1-32.

### LETTER OF JEREMIAH TO THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON, TO COUNTERACT THE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY THE FALSE PROPHETS OF A SPEEDY RESTORATION.

1. *residue of the elders* — those still surviving from the time when they were carried to Babylon with Jeconiah; the other elders of the captives had died by either a natural or a violent death.

2. *queen* — Nehushta, the queen mother, daughter of Elnathan (◀1248▶ 2 Kings 24:8,15). (Elnathan, her father, is perhaps the same as the one mentioned in ▶282▶ Jeremiah 26:22). She reigned jointly with her son.

*princes* — All the men of authority were taken away lest they should organize a rebellion. Jeremiah wrote his letter while the calamity was still recent, to console the captives under it.

3. *Zedekiah ... sent unto Babylon* — In ▶2619▶ Jeremiah 51:59, Zedekiah himself goes to Babylon; *here* he *sends* ambassadors. Whatever was the object of the embassy, it shows that Zedekiah only reigned at the pleasure of the king of Babylon, who might have restored Jeconiah, had he pleased. Hence, Zedekiah permitted Jeremiah's letter to be sent, not only as being led by Hananiah's death to attach greater credit to the prophet's words, but also as the letter accorded with his own wish that the Jews should remain in Chaldea till Jeconiah's death.

*Hilkiah* — the high priest who found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and showed it to "Shaphan" the scribe (the same Shaphan probably as here), who showed it to King Josiah (◀1218▶ 2 Kings 22:8, etc.). The sons of Hilkiah and Shaphan inherited from their fathers some respect for sacred things. So in ▶2823▶ Jeremiah 36:25, "Gemariah" interceded with King Jehoiakim that the prophet's roll should not be burned.

5. *Build ... houses* — In opposition to the false prophets' suggestions, who told the captives that their captivity would soon cease, Jeremiah tells them that it will be of long duration, and that therefore they should build houses, as Babylon is to be for long their home.

**6. *that ye ... be ... not diminished*** — It was God’s will that the seed of Abraham should not fail; thus consolation is given them, and the hope, though not of an immediate, yet of an ultimate, return.

**7.** (<sup><1500></sup>Ezra 6:10 <sup><1500></sup>Romans 13:1 <sup><1500></sup>1 Timothy 2:2). Not only bear the Babylonian yoke patiently, but *pray for* your masters, that is, while the captivity lasts. God’s good time was to come when they were to pray for Babylon’s downfall (<sup><1500></sup>Jeremiah 51:35 <sup><1500></sup>Psalms 137:8). They were not to forestall that time. True religion teaches patient submission, not sedition, even though the prince be an unbeliever. In all states of life let us not throw away the comfort we *may* have, because we have not all we *would* have. There is here a foretaste of gospel love towards enemies (<sup><1500></sup>Matthew 5:44).

**8. *your dreams which ye caused to be dreamed*** — The Latin adage says, “The people wish to be deceived, so let them be deceived.” Not mere credulity misleads men, but their own perverse “love of darkness rather than light.” It was not priests who originated priestcraft, but the people’s own morbid appetite to be deceived; for example, Aaron and the golden calf (<sup><1500></sup>Exodus 32:1-4). So the Jews *caused* or *made* the prophets to tell them encouraging dreams (<sup><1500></sup>Jeremiah 23:25,26 <sup><1500></sup>Ecclesiastes 5:7 <sup><1500></sup>Zechariah 10:2 <sup><1500></sup>John 3:19-21).

**10.** (See on <sup><1500></sup>Jeremiah 25:11; <sup><1500></sup>Jeremiah 25:12 <sup><1500></sup>Daniel 9:2). This proves that the seventy years date from Jeconiah’s captivity, not from the last captivity. The specification of time was to curb the impatience of the Jews lest they should hasten before God’s time.

***good word*** — promise of a return.

**11. *I know*** — *I* alone; not the false prophets who *know* nothing of My purposes, though they pretend to know.

***thoughts ... I think*** — (<sup><1500></sup>Isaiah 55:9). Glancing at the Jews who had no “thoughts of peace,” but only of “evil” (misfortune), because *they* could not conceive how deliverance could come to them. The moral malady of man is twofold — at one time *vain confidence*; then, when that is disappointed, *despair*. So the Jews first laughed at God’s threats, confident that they should speedily return; then, when cast down from that confidence, they sank in inconsolable despondency.

***expected end*** — literally, “end and expectation,” that is, an end, and that such an end as you wish for. Two nouns joined by “and,” standing for a noun and adjective. So in <sup><1500></sup>Jeremiah 36:27, “the roll and the words,” that is, the roll of words; <sup><1500></sup>Genesis 3:16, “sorrow and conception,” that is,



sorrow in conception. Compare <sup><1238></sup>Proverbs 23:18, where, as here “end” means “a happy issue.”

**12. Fulfilled** (<sup><208></sup>Daniel 9:3, etc.). When God designs mercy, He puts it into the hearts of His people to pray for the mercy designed. When such a spirit of prayer is poured out, it is a sure sign of coming mercy.

**go** — to the temple and other places of prayer: contrasted with their previous sloth as to going to seek God.

**13.** (<sup><134></sup>Leviticus 26:40-42,44,45).

**14. to be found** — (<sup><136></sup>Psalm 32:6 <sup><2816></sup>Isaiah 55:6).

**turn ... captivity** — play upon sounds, *shabti ... shebith*.

**15. Because** — referring not to the preceding words, but to <sup><190></sup>Jeremiah 29:10,11, “Jehovah saith this to you” (that is, the prophecy of the continuance of the captivity seventy years), “because ye have said, The Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon,” namely, foretelling our *speedy* deliverance (this their prophecy is *supposed*, not *expressed*; accordingly, <sup><196></sup>Jeremiah 29:16-19 contradict this false hope again, <sup><198></sup>Jeremiah 29:8,9,21). He, in this fifteenth verse, turns his address from the godly (<sup><192></sup>Jeremiah 29:12-14) to the ungodly listeners, to false prophets.

**16. people ... in this city ... not gone forth** — So far from your returning to Jerusalem soon, even *your brethren* still left dwelling there shall themselves also be cast into exile. He mentions “the throne of *David*,” lest they should think that, because David’s kingdom was to be perpetual, no severe, though temporary, chastisements could interpose (<sup><139></sup>Psalm 89:29-36).

**17. vile figs** — *Hebrew*, “horrible,” or nauseous, from a root, “to regard with loathing” (see <sup><118></sup>Jeremiah 24:8,10).

**18. removed to all ... kingdoms** — (<sup><154></sup>Jeremiah 15:4 <sup><135></sup>Deuteronomy 28:25).

**curse**, etc. — (<sup><115></sup>Jeremiah 29:6 18:16 19:8).

**21. Zedekiah** — brother of Zephaniah (<sup><195></sup>Jeremiah 29:25), both being sons of Maaseiah; probably of the same family as the false prophet under Ahab in Israel (<sup><121></sup>1 Kings 22:11,24).

**22. shall be taken ... a curse** — that is, a formula of imprecation.

**Lord make thee like Zedekiah** — (Compare <sup><141></sup>Genesis 48:20 <sup><265></sup>Isaiah 65:15).

**roasted in the fire** — a Chaldean punishment (<sup><2786></sup>Daniel 3:6).

**23. villainy** — literally, “sinful folly” (<sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 32:6).

**24-32.** A second communication which Jeremiah sent to Babylon, after the messenger who carried his first letter had brought a letter from the false prophet Shemaiah to Zephaniah, etc., condemning Jeremiah and reproving the authorities for not having apprehended him.

**Nehelamite** — a name derived either from his father or from a place: alluding at the same time to the *Hebrew* meaning, “a dreamer” (compare <sup><2918></sup>Jeremiah 29:8).

**25. in thy name** — without sanction of “the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,” which words stand in antithesis to “thy name” (<sup><4568></sup>John 5:43).

**Zephaniah** — the second priest, or substitute (*Sagan*) of the high priest. He was one of those sent to consult Jeremiah by Zedekiah (<sup><2001></sup>Jeremiah 21:1). Slain by Nebuchadnezzar at the capture of Jerusalem (<sup><1258></sup>2 Kings 25:18-21). Zephaniah was in particular addressed, as being likely to take up against Jeremiah the prophet’s prediction against his brother Zedekiah at Babylon (<sup><2020></sup>Jeremiah 29:21). Zephaniah was to read it to the *priests*, and in the presence of *all the people*, in the temple.

**26. thee ... in the stead of Jehoiada** — Zephaniah’s promotion as second priest, owing to Jehoiada’s being then in exile, was unexpected. Shemaiah thus accuses him of ingratitude towards God, who had so highly exalted him before his regular time.

**ye should be officers ... for every man** — Ye should, as bearing rule in the temple (see on <sup><2001></sup>Jeremiah 20:1), apprehend every false prophet like Jeremiah.

**mad** — Inspired prophets were often so called by the ungodly (<sup><1211></sup>2 Kings 9:11 <sup><4001></sup>Acts 26:24 2:13,15,17,18). Jeremiah is in this a type of Christ, against whom the same charge was brought (<sup><4000></sup>John 10:20).

**prison** — rather, “the stocks” (see on <sup><2002></sup>Jeremiah 20:2).

**stocks** — from a root, “to confine”; hence rather, “a narrow dungeon.” According to <sup><1578></sup>Deuteronomy 17:8,9, the priest was judge in such cases, but had no right to put into the stocks; this right he had assumed to himself in the troubled state of the times.

**27. of Anathoth** — said contemptuously, as “Jesus of Nazareth.”

***maketh himself*** — as if *God* had not made him one, but he *himself* had done so.

28. Referring to Jeremiah's first letter to Babylon (<sup>2015</sup>Jeremiah 29:5).

29. ***Zephaniah ... read ... in the ears of Jeremiah*** — He seems to have been less prejudiced against Jeremiah than the others; hence he reads the charge to the prophet, that he should not be condemned without a hearing. This accords with Shemaiah's imputation against Zephaniah for want of zeal against Jeremiah (<sup>2019</sup>Jeremiah 29:26,27). Hence the latter was chosen by King Zedekiah as one of the deputation to Jeremiah (<sup>2001</sup>Jeremiah 21:1 37:3).

30. This resumes the thread of the sentence which began at <sup>2025</sup>Jeremiah 29:25, but was left there not completed. Here, in this thirtieth verse, it is completed, not however in continuity, but by a new period. The same construction occurs in <sup>6512</sup>Romans 5:12-15.

32. ***not ... a man to dwell*** — (<sup>1638</sup>Deuteronomy 28:18).

***not ... behold the good*** — As he despised the lawful time and wished to return before the time God had expressly announced, in just retribution he should not share in the restoration from Babylon at all.

***rebellion*** — going against God's revealed will as to the time (<sup>2016</sup>Jeremiah 28:16).

# CHAPTER 30

## ☞ JEREMIAH 30:1-24.

### RESTORATION OF THE JEWS FROM BABYLON AFTER ITS CAPTURE, AND RAISING UP OF MESSIAH.

**2. Write ... in a book** — After the destruction of Jerusalem Jeremiah is not ordered as heretofore to *speak*, but to *write* the succeeding prophecy (☞ Jeremiah 30:4, etc.), so as thereby it might be read by his countrymen wheresoever they might be in their dispersion.

**3. bring again ... captivity of ... Israel and Judah** — the restoration not merely of the *Jews* (treated of in this thirtieth chapter), but also of the ten tribes (“Israel”; treated in the thirty-first chapter), together forming the whole nation (☞ Jeremiah 30:18 ☞ Jeremiah 32:44 ☞ Ezekiel 39:25 ☞ Amos 9:14,15). “Israel” is mentioned first because its exile was longer than that of Judah. *Some* captives of the Israelite ten tribes returned with those of Judah (☞ Luke 2:36; “Aser” is mentioned). But these are only a pledge of the *full* restoration hereafter (☞ Romans 11:26, “*All Israel*”). Compare ☞ Jeremiah 16:15. This third verse is a brief statement of the subject before the prophecy itself is given.

**5. We have heard ... trembling** — God introduces the Jews speaking that which they will be reduced to at last in spite of their stubbornness. Threat and promise are combined: the former briefly; namely, the misery of the Jews in the Babylonian captivity down to their “trembling” and “fear” arising from the approach of the Medo-Persian army of Cyrus against Babylon; the promise is more fully dwelt on; namely, their “trembling” will issue in a deliverance as speedy as is the transition from a woman’s labor pangs to her joy at giving birth to a child (☞ Jeremiah 30:6).

**6. Ask** — Consult all the authorities, men or books, you can, you will not find an instance. Yet in that coming day men will be seen with their hands pressed on their loins, as women do to repress their pangs. God will drive men through pain to gestures more fitting a woman than a man (☞ Jeremiah 4:31 6:24). The metaphor is often used to express the previous pain followed by the sudden deliverance of Israel, as in the case of a woman in childbirth (☞ Isaiah 66:7-9).

**pale<sup>n</sup>ess** — properly the color of herbs blasted and fading: the *green pale<sup>n</sup>ess* of one in jaundice: the *sickly pale<sup>n</sup>ess* of terror.

**7. great** — marked by great calamities (<sup>2011</sup> Joel 2:11,31 <sup>3058</sup> Amos 5:18 <sup>3014</sup> Zephaniah 1:14).

**none like it ... but he shall be saved** — (<sup>2701</sup> Daniel 12:1). The partial deliverance at Babylon's downfall prefigures the final, complete deliverance of Israel, literal and spiritual, at the downfall of the mystical Babylon (<sup>6801</sup> Revelation 18:1-19:21).

**8. his yoke ... thy neck** — his, that is, Jacob's (<sup>3811</sup> Jeremiah 30:7), the yoke imposed *on him*. The transition to the second person is frequent, God speaking *of* Jacob or Israel, at the same time addressing him directly. So "him" rightly follows; "foreigners shall no more make him their servant" (<sup>2534</sup> Jeremiah 25:14). After the deliverance by Cyrus, Persia, Alexander, Antiochus, and Rome made Judah their servant. The full of deliverance meant must, therefore, be still future.

**9.** Instead of *serv<sup>n</sup>g strangers* (<sup>3818</sup> Jeremiah 30:8), they shall serve the Lord, their rightful King in the theocracy (<sup>3227</sup> Ezekiel 21:27).

**David, their king** — No *king* of David's seed has held the scepter since the captivity; for Zerubbabel, though of David's line, never claimed the title of "king." The *Son of David*, Messiah, must therefore be meant; so the *Targum* (compare <sup>2508</sup> Isaiah 55:3,4 <sup>3323</sup> Ezekiel 34:23,24 37:24 <sup>3818</sup> Hosea 3:5 <sup>6125</sup> Romans 11:25-32). He was appointed to the throne of David (<sup>2307</sup> Isaiah 9:7 <sup>4012</sup> Luke 1:32). He is here joined with Jehovah as claiming equal allegiance. God is our "King," only when we are subject to Christ; God rules us not immediately, but through His Son (<sup>812</sup> John 5:22,23,27).

**raise up** — applied to the judges whom God *raised up* as *deliverers* of Israel out of the hand of its oppressors (<sup>0126</sup> Judges 2:16 3:9). So Christ was *raised up* as the antitypical Deliverer (<sup>916</sup> Psalm 2:6 <sup>4069</sup> Luke 1:69 <sup>4023</sup> Acts 2:30 13:23).

**10. from afar** — Be not afraid as if the distance of the places whither ye are to be dispersed precludes the possibility of return.

**seed** — Though through the many years of captivity intervening, you yourselves may not see the restoration, the promise shall be fulfilled to your *seed*, primarily at the return from Babylon, fully at the final restoration.

**quiet ... none ... make ... afraid** — (<sup>2236</sup> Jeremiah 23:6 <sup>3841</sup> Zechariah 14:11).

**11. *though ... full end of all nations ... yet ... not ... of thee*** — (<sup>3008</sup>Amos 9:8). The punishment of reprobates is final and fatal; that of God's people temporary and corrective. Babylon was utterly destroyed: Israel after chastisement was delivered.

***in measure*** — literally, “with judgment,” that is, moderation, not in the full rigor of justice (<sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 10:24 46:28 <sup>4901</sup>Psalms 6:1 <sup>2378</sup>Isaiah 27:8).

***not ... altogether unpunished*** — (<sup>0230</sup>Exodus 34:7).

**12.** The desperate circumstances of the Jews are here represented as an incurable wound. Their sin is so grievous that their hope of the punishment (their exile) soon coming to an end is vain (<sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 8:22 15:18 <sup>4866</sup>2 Chronicles 36:16).

**13. *none to plead*** — a new image from a court of justice.

***bound up*** — namely, with the *bandages* applied to tie up a wound.

***no healing medicines*** — literally, “medicines of healing,” or else applications, (literally, “ascensions”) of medicaments.

**14. *lovers*** — the peoples formerly allied to thee, Assyria and Egypt (compare <sup>2302</sup>Lamentations 1:2).

***seek thee not*** — have cast away all concern for thee in thy distress.

***wound of an enemy*** — a wound such as an enemy would inflict. God condescends to employ language adapted to human conceptions. He is incapable of “enmity” or “cruelty”; it was their grievous sin which righteously demanded a grievous punishment, *as though* He were an “enemy” (<sup>2406</sup>Jeremiah 5:6 <sup>3834</sup>Job 13:24 30:21).

**15. *Why criest thou*** — as if God's severity was excessive. Thou hast no reason to complain, for thine affliction is just. Thy cry is too late, for the time of repentance and mercy is past [CALVIN].

**16. *Therefore*** — connected with <sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 30:13, because “There is none to plead thy cause ... *therefore*” I will plead thy cause, and heal thy wound, by overwhelming thy foes. This fifteenth verse is inserted to amplify what was said at the close of <sup>2404</sup>Jeremiah 30:14. When the false ways of peace, suggested by the so-called prophets, had only ended in the people's irremediable ruin, the true prophet comes forward to announce the grace of God as bestowing repentance and healing.

*devour thee ... be devoured ... spoil ... be a spoil ... prey upon ... give for a prey* — retribution in kind (see on <sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 2:3; <sup><1232></sup>Exodus 23:22 <sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 33:1).

17. (<sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 8:22 33:6).

*Outcast* — as a wife put away by her husband (<sup><2314></sup>Isaiah 62:4, contrasted with <sup><2412></sup>Jeremiah 30:12).

*Zion* — alluding to its *Hebrew* meaning, “dryness”; “sought after” by none, as would be the case with an *arid* region (<sup><2312></sup>Isaiah 62:12). The extremity of the people, so far from being an obstacle to, will be the chosen opportunity of, God’s grace.

18. *bring again ... captivity* — (<sup><2617></sup>Jeremiah 33:7,11).

*tents* — used to intimate that their present dwellings in Chaldea were but temporary as *tents*.

*have mercy on dwelling-places* — (<sup><1942></sup>Psalm 102:13).

*own heap* — on the same hill, that is, site, a hill being the usual site chosen for a city (compare <sup><2611></sup>Joshua 11:13, *Margin*). This better answers the parallel clause, “after the manner thereof” (that is, in the same becoming ways as formerly), than the rendering, “its own heap of *ruins*,” as in <sup><2442></sup>Jeremiah 49:2.

*palace* — the king’s, on Mount Zion.

*remain* — rather, “shall be inhabited” (see on <sup><2476></sup>Jeremiah 17:6, <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 17:25). This confirms *English Version*, “palace,” not as others translate, “the temple” (see <sup><1168></sup>1 Kings 16:18 <sup><1255></sup>2 Kings 15:25).

19. *thanksgiving* — The *Hebrew* word includes *confession* as well as *praise*; for, in the case of God, the highest *praises* we can bestow are only *confessing* what God really is [BENGEL], (<sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 17:26 31:12,13 33:11 <sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 35:10 51:11).

*multiply them* — (<sup><2305></sup>Zechariah 10:8).

20. *as aforetime* — as flourishing as in the time of David.

21. *their nobles* — rather, “their Glorious One,” or “Leader” (compare <sup><4185></sup>Acts 3:15 <sup><2020></sup>Hebrews 2:10), answering to “their Governor” in the parallel clause.

*of themselves* — of their own nation, a Jew, not a foreigner; applicable to Zerubbabel, or J. Hyrcanus (hereditary high priest and governor), only as

types of Christ (<sup><0490></sup>Genesis 49:10 <sup><318E></sup>Micah 5:2 <sup><049E></sup>Romans 9:5), the antitypical “David” (<sup><2R09></sup>Jeremiah 30:9).

**cause him to draw near** — as the great Priest (<sup><04E2></sup>Exodus 19:22 <sup><0217></sup>Leviticus 21:17), through whom believers also have access to God (<sup><3109></sup>Hebrews 10:19-22). His priestly and kingly characters are similarly combined (<sup><0404></sup>Psalms 110:4 <sup><3163></sup>Zechariah 6:13).

**who ... engaged ... heart to approach** — literally, “pledged his heart,” that is, his life; a thing unique; Messiah alone has made His life responsible as the surety (<sup><3122></sup>Hebrews 7:22 9:11-15), in order to gain access not only for Himself, but for us to God. *Heart* is here used for *life*, to express the *courage* which it needed to undertake such a tremendous suretyship. The question implies admiration at one being found competent by His twofold nature, as God and man, for the task. Compare the interrogation (<sup><261E></sup>Isaiah 63:1-3).

**22. ye shall be my people**, etc. — The covenant shall be renewed between God and His people through Messiah’s mediation (<sup><2R2E></sup>Jeremiah 30:21 31:1,33 32:38 <sup><3113></sup>Ezekiel 11:20 36:28).

**23, 24.** (<sup><2C39></sup>Jeremiah 23:19). Vengeance upon God’s foes always accompanies manifestations of His grace to His people.

**continuing** — literally, “sojourning,” abiding constantly; appropriately here in the case of Babylon, which was to be *permanently* destroyed, substituted for “whirling itself about” (“grievous” in *English Version*) (see on <sup><2C39></sup>Jeremiah 23:19,20), where the *temporary* downfall of Judea is spoken of.



# CHAPTER 31

## JEREMIAH 31:1-40.

### CONTINUATION OF THE PROPHECY IN THE THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

As in that chapter the restoration of Judah, so in this the restoration of Israel's ten tribes is foretold.

1. *At the same time* — “In the latter days” (<sup>261B</sup>Jeremiah 30:24).

*the God of* — manifesting My *grace* to (<sup>417C</sup>Genesis 17:7 <sup>412C</sup>Matthew 22:32 <sup>621B</sup>Revelation 21:3).

*all ... Israel* — not the exiles of the *south* kingdom of Judah only, but also the *north* kingdom of the ten tribes; and not merely Israel in general, but “*all* the families of Israel.” Never yet fulfilled (<sup>612B</sup>Romans 11:26).

2. Upon the grace manifested to Israel “in the wilderness” God grounds His argument for renewing His favors to them *now* in their exile; because His covenant is “everlasting” (<sup>261B</sup>Jeremiah 31:3), and changes not. The same argument occurs in <sup>281B</sup>Hosea 13:5,9,10 14:4,5,8. Babylon is fitly compared to the “wilderness,” as in both alike Israel was as a stranger far from his appointed “rest” or home, and Babylon is in <sup>210B</sup>Isaiah 40:3 called a “desert” (compare <sup>261C</sup>Jeremiah 50:12).

*I went to cause him to rest* — namely, in the pillar of cloud and fire, the symbol of God's presence, which *went* before Israel to *search a resting-place* (<sup>401B</sup>Numbers 10:33 <sup>231A</sup>Isaiah 63:14) for the people, both a temporary one at each halt in the wilderness, and a permanent one in Canaan (<sup>123A</sup>Exodus 33:14 <sup>461B</sup>Deuteronomy 3:20 <sup>421A</sup>Joshua 21:44 <sup>491B</sup>Psalms 95:11 <sup>311B</sup>Hebrews 3:11).

3. Israel gratefully acknowledges in reply God's *past* grace; but at the same time tacitly implies by the expression “of old,” that God does not appear to her *now*. “God appeared to me *of old*, but now I am forsaken!” God replies, Nay, I love thee with the same love now as of old. My love was not a momentary impulse, but *from* “everlasting” in My counsels, and *to* “everlasting” in its continuance; hence originated the covenant whereby I gratuitously adopted thee (<sup>310B</sup>Malachi 1:2 <sup>612B</sup>Romans 11:28,29). *Margin*

translates, “from afar,” which does not answer so well as “of old,” to “in the wilderness” (<sup>2610</sup>Jeremiah 31:2), which refers to the *olden* times of Israel’s history.

**with loving kindness ... drawn** — (<sup>2810</sup>Hosea 11:4). Rather, “I have drawn out continually My loving kindness toward thee.” So <sup>4960</sup>Psalms 36:10, “Continue (*Margin*, ‘Draw out at length’) Thy loving kindness.” By virtue of My everlasting love I will still extend My loving kindness to thee. So <sup>2421</sup>Isaiah 44:21, “O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me.”

**4. I will build ... thou shalt be built** — The combination of the *active* and *passive* to express the same fact implies the infallible certainty of its accomplishment. “Build,” that is, establish in prosperity (<sup>2610</sup>Jeremiah 33:7).

**adorned with ... tabrets** — (<sup>4986</sup>1 Samuel 18:6). Or, “adorn thyself with thy timbrels”; used by damsels on occasions of public rejoicings (<sup>4250</sup>Exodus 15:20 <sup>4713</sup>Judges 11:34). Israel had cast away all instruments of joy in her exile (<sup>4570</sup>Psalms 137:4).

**dances** — holy joy, not carnal mirth.

**5. Samaria** — the metropolis of the ten tribes; here equivalent to *Israel*. The *mountainous* nature of their country suited the growth of the *vine*.

**eat ... as common** — literally, “shall profane,” that is, shall put to common use. For the first three years after planting, the vine was “not to be eaten of”; on the fourth year the fruit was to be “holy to praise the Lord withal”; on the fifth year the fruit was to be *eaten as common*, no longer restricted to *holy* use (<sup>4823</sup>Leviticus 19:23-25; compare <sup>4310</sup>Deuteronomy 20:6 28:30, *Margin*). Thus the idea here is, “The same persons who plant shall reap the fruits”; it shall no longer be that one shall plant and another reap the fruit.

**6.** The watchmen stationed on eminences (types of the preachers of the gospel), shall summon the ten tribes to go up to the annual feasts at Jerusalem (“Zion”), as they used to do before the revolt and the setting up of the idol calves at Daniel and Beer-sheba (<sup>3571</sup>Ezekiel 37:21,22).

**Mount Ephraim** — not one single mountain, but the whole mountainous region of the ten tribes.

**our God** — from whom we formerly revolted, but who is now *our* God. An earnest of that good time to come is given in the partial success of the gospel in its first preaching in Samaria (<sup>4800</sup>John 4:1-42 <sup>4485</sup>Acts 8:5-25).

7. The people are urged with praises and prayers to supplicate for their universal restoration. Jehovah is represented in the context (<sup>2300E</sup>Jeremiah 31:1,8), as promising immediately to restore Israel. They therefore praise God for the restoration, being as certain of it as if it were actually accomplished; and at the same time *pray for* it, as prayer was a means to the desired end. Prayer does not move God to grant our wishes, but when God has determined to grant our wishes, He puts it into our hearts to pray for the thing desired. Compare (<sup>39A21E</sup>Psalm 102:13-17, as to the connection of Israel's restoration with the prayers of His people (<sup>2301E</sup>Isaiah 62:1-6).

**for Jacob** — on account of Jacob; on account of his approaching deliverance by Jehovah.

**among** — “for,” that is, on account of, would more exactly suit the parallelism to “for Jacob.”

**chief of the nations** — Israel: as the parallelism to “Jacob” proves (compare (<sup>2205E</sup>Exodus 19:5 (<sup>49A23E</sup>Psalm 135:4 (<sup>3101E</sup>Amos 6:1)). God estimates the greatness of nations not by man's standard of material resources, but by His electing favor.

8. **north** — Assyria, Media, etc. (see on (<sup>2482E</sup>Jeremiah 3:12; (<sup>2488E</sup>Jeremiah 3:18 23:8).

**gather from ... coasts of ... earth** — (<sup>2304E</sup>Ezekiel 20:34,41,34:13).

**blind ... lame**, etc. — Not even the most infirm and unfit persons for a journey shall be left behind, so universal shall be the restoration.

**a great company** — or, they shall return “in a great company” [MAURER].

9. **weeping** — for their past sins which caused their exile (<sup>4605E</sup>Psalm 126:5,6). Although they come with weeping, they shall return with joy (<sup>2504E</sup>Jeremiah 50:4,5).

**supplications** — (Compare (<sup>2618E</sup>Jeremiah 31:18,19 (<sup>2482E</sup>Jeremiah 3:21-25 (<sup>3820E</sup>Zechariah 12:10)). *Margin* translates “favors,” as in (<sup>6112E</sup>Joshua 11:20 (<sup>4508E</sup>Ezra 9:8; thus God's *favors* or *compassions* are put in opposition to the people's *weeping*; their tears shall be turned into joy. But *English Version* suits the parallelism best.

**I will cause ... to walk by ... waters ... straight way** — (<sup>2351E</sup>Isaiah 35:6-8 43:19 49:10,11). God will give them waters to satisfy their thirst as in the wilderness journey from Egypt. So spiritually (<sup>4106E</sup>Matthew 5:6 (<sup>4079E</sup>John 7:37).

**Ephraim** — the ten tribes no longer severed from Judah, but forming one people with it.

**my first-born** — (<sup><1042></sup>Exodus 4:22 <sup><2101></sup>Hosea 11:1 <sup><6104></sup>Romans 9:4). So the elect Church (<sup><4768></sup>2 Corinthians 6:18 <sup><5018></sup>James 1:18).

**10.** The tidings of God's interposition in behalf of Israel will arrest the attention of even the uttermost Gentile nations.

**He that scattered will gather** — He who scattered knows where to find Israel; He who smote can also heal.

**keep** — not only will *gather*, but *keep safely* to the end (<sup><6134></sup>John 13:1 17:11).

**shepherd** — (<sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 40:11 <sup><2612></sup>Ezekiel 34:12-14).

**11. ransomed ... from ... hand of ... stronger** — No strength of the foe can prevent the Lord from delivering Jacob (<sup><2344></sup>Isaiah 49:24,25).

**12. height of Zion** — (<sup><2473></sup>Ezekiel 17:23).

**flow** — There shall be a *conflux* of worshippers to the temple on Zion (<sup><2111></sup>Isaiah 2:2 <sup><3011></sup>Micah 4:1).

**to the goodness of ... Lord** — (See <sup><2614></sup>Jeremiah 31:14). *Beneficence*, that is, to the Lord as the *source of all good things* (<sup><2315></sup>Hosea 3:5), to pray to Him and praise Him for these blessings of which He is the Fountainhead.

**watered garden** — (<sup><2811></sup>Isaiah 58:11). Not merely for a time, but continually full of holy comfort.

**not sorrow any more** — referring to the Church triumphant, as well as to literal Israel (<sup><2350></sup>Isaiah 35:10 65:19 <sup><6204></sup>Revelation 21:4).

**13. young ... old** — (<sup><3007></sup>Zechariah 8:4,5).

**14. my goodness** — (<sup><2612></sup>Jeremiah 31:12).

**15. Ramah** — In Benjamin, east of the great northern road, two hours' journey from Jerusalem. Rachel, who all her life had pined for children (<sup><0301></sup>Genesis 30:1), and who died with "sorrow" in giving birth to Benjamin (<sup><0358></sup>Genesis 35:18,19, *Margin*; <sup><0101></sup>1 Samuel 10:2), and was buried at Ramah, near Beth-lehem, is represented as raising her head from the tomb, and as breaking forth into "weeping" at seeing the whole land depopulated of her sons, the Ephraimites. Ramah was the place where Nebuzara-dan collected all the Jews in chains, previous to their removal to Babylon (<sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 40:1). God therefore consoles her with the promise of their

restoration. <sup>(4127)</sup>Matthew 2:17,18 quotes this as fulfilled in the massacre of the innocents under Herod. “A lesser and a greater event, of different times, may answer to the single sense of one passage of Scripture, until the prophecy is *exhausted*” [BENDEL]. Besides the temporary reference to the exiles in Babylon, the Holy Spirit foreshadowed ultimately Messiah’s exile in Egypt, and the desolation caused in the neighborhood of Rachel’s tomb by Herod’s massacre of the children, whose mothers had “sons of sorrow” (*Ben-oni*), just as Rachel had. The return of Messiah (the representative of Israel) from Egypt, and the future restoration of Israel, both the literal and the spiritual (including the innocents), at the Lord’s second advent, are antitypical of the restoration of Israel from Babylon, which is the ground of consolation held out here by Jeremiah. The clause, “They were not,” that is, were dead (<sup>(4423)</sup>Genesis 42:13), does not apply so strictly to the exiles in Babylon as it does to the history of Messiah and His people — past, present, and future. So the words, “There is hope in thine end,” are to be fulfilled ultimately, when Rachel shall meet her murdered children at the resurrection, at the same time that literal Israel is to be restored. “They were not,” in *Hebrew*, is *singular*; *each was not*: each mother at the Beth-lehem massacre had but *one* child to lament, as the limitation of age in Herod’s order, “two years and under,” implies; this use of the *singular* distributively (the mothers weeping severally, *each for her own* child), is a coincidence between the prophecy of the Beth-lehem massacre and the event, the more remarkable as not being obvious: the *singular*, too, is appropriate as to *Messiah* in His Egyptian exile, who was to be a leading object of Rachel’s lamentation.

**16. *thy work*** — thy parental weeping for thy children [ROSENMULLER]. Thine affliction in the loss of thy children, murdered for Christ’s sake, shall not be fruitless to thee, as was the case in thy giving birth to the “child of thy sorrow,” Benjamin. Primarily, also, thy grief shall not be perpetual: the exiles shall return, and the land be inhabited again [CALVIN].

***come again*** — (<sup>(3011)</sup>Hosea 1:11).

**17. *hope in ... end*** — All thy calamities shall have a prosperous issue.

**18. *Ephraim*** — representing the ten tribes.

***bemoaning himself*** — The spirit of penitent supplication shall at last be poured on Israel as the necessary forerunner of their restoration (<sup>(3227)</sup>Zechariah 12:10-14).

***Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*** — In the first clause the chastisement itself is meant; in the second the *beneficial effect* of it in teaching the penitent true wisdom.

**bullock unaccustomed to ... yoke** — A similar image occurs in <sup><4625></sup>Deuteronomy 32:15. Compare “stiff-necked,” <sup><4175></sup>Acts 7:51 <sup><0239></sup>Exodus 32:9, an image from *refractory* oxen. Before my chastisement I needed the severe correction I received, as much as an untamed bullock needs the goad. Compare <sup><4005></sup>Acts 9:5, where the same figure is used of Saul while unconverted. Israel has had a longer chastisement than Judah, not having been restored even at the Jews’ return from Babylon. Hereafter, at its restoration, it shall confess the sore discipline was all needed to “accustom” it to God’s “easy yoke” (<sup><4129></sup>Matthew 11:29,30).

**turn thou me** — by Thy converting Spirit (<sup><2751></sup>Lamentations 5:21). But why does Ephraim pray for conversion, seeing that he is already converted? Because we are converted by progressive steps, and need the same power of God to carry forward, as to originate, our conversion (<sup><8164></sup>John 6:44,65; compare with <sup><2708></sup>Isaiah 27:3 <sup><4105></sup>1 Peter 1:5 <sup><5106></sup>Philippians 1:6).

**19. after that I was turned, I repented** — Repentance in the full sense follows, not precedes, our being turned to God by God (<sup><3027></sup>Zechariah 12:10). The Jews’ “looking to Him whom they pierced” shall result in their “mourning for Him.” Repentance is the tear that flows from the eye of faith turned to Jesus. He Himself gives it: we give it not of ourselves, but must come to Him for it (<sup><4151></sup>Acts 5:31).

**instructed** — made to learn by chastisement. God’s Spirit often works through the corrections of His providence.

**smote upon ... thigh** — (<sup><3212></sup>Ezekiel 21:12). A token of indignant remorse, shame, and grief, because of his past sin.

**bear ... reproach of ... youth** — “because the calamities which I bore were the just punishment of my *scandalous wantonness* against God in *my youth*”; alluding to the idols set up at Daniel and Beth-el immediately after the ten tribes revolted from Judah. His sense of *shame* shows that he no longer delights in his sin.

**20. Is Ephraim my dear son?** etc. — The question implies that a negative answer was to be expected. Who would have thought that one so undutiful to His heavenly Father as Ephraim had been should still be regarded by God as a “pleasant child?” Certainly he was not so in respect to his sin. But by virtue of God’s “everlasting love” (<sup><2818></sup>Jeremiah 31:3) on Ephraim’s being “turned” to God, he was immediately welcomed as God’s “dear son.” This verse sets forth God’s readiness to welcome the penitent (<sup><3518></sup>Jeremiah 31:18,19), anticipating his return with prevenient grace and love. Compare <sup><0239></sup>Luke 15:20: “When he was *yet a great way off*, his father saw him and had compassion,” etc.

*spake against* — threatened him for his idolatry.

*remember* — with favor and concern, as in <sup><0001></sup>Genesis 8:1 30:22.

*bowels ... troubled for him* — (<sup><0523></sup>Deuteronomy 32:36 <sup><2515></sup>Isaiah 63:15 <sup><2818></sup>Hosea 11:8) — namely, with the yearnings of compassionate love. The “bowels” include the region of the heart, the seat of the affections.

**21. waymarks** — *pillars* to mark the road for the returning exiles. Caravans set up *pillars*, or pointed *heaps* of stones, to mark the way through the desert against their return. So Israel is told by God to mark the way by which they went in leaving their country for exile; for by the same way they shall return.

*highway* — (<sup><2818></sup>Isaiah 35:8,10).

**22. go about** — namely, after human helps (<sup><2018></sup>Jeremiah 2:18,23,36). Why not return immediately to me? MAURER translates, as in <sup><2116></sup>Song of Solomon 5:6, “How long wilt thou *withdraw thyself*?” Let thy past backslidings suffice thee now that a *new* era approaches. What God finds fault with in them is, that they looked *hither and thither*, leaning on contingencies, instead of at once trusting the word of God, which promised their restoration. To assure them of this, God promises to *create a new thing in their land, A woman shall compass a man*. CALVIN explains this: Israel, who is feeble as a woman, shall be superior to the warlike Chaldeans; the captives shall reduce their captors to captivity. HENGSTENBERG makes the “woman” the Jewish Church, and the “man” Jehovah, her husband, whose love she will again seek (<sup><2116></sup>Hosea 2:6,7). MAURER, A woman shall protect (<sup><0520></sup>Deuteronomy 32:10, *Margin*; <sup><0520></sup>Psalms 32:10) a man, that is, You need fear no foes in returning, for all things shall be so peaceful that a *woman* would be able to take man’s part, and act as his *protector*. But the Christian fathers [AUGUSTINE, etc.], almost unanimously interpreted it of *the Virgin Mary compassing Christ in her womb*. This view is favored: —

- (1) By the connection; it gives a reason why the exiles should desire a return to their country, namely, because Christ was conceived there.
- (2) The word “created” implies a divine power put forth in the creation of a body in the Virgin’s womb by the Holy Ghost for the second Adam, such as was exerted in creating the first Adam (<sup><0135></sup>Luke 1:35 <sup><2815></sup>Hebrews 10:5).
- (3) The phrase, “a *new* thing,” something unprecedented; a man whose like had never existed before, at once God and man; a mother out of the



ordinary course of nature, at once mother and virgin. An extraordinary mode of generation; one conceived by the Holy Ghost without man.

(4) The specification “in the land” (not “earth,” as *English Version*), namely, of *Judah*, where probably Christ was *conceived*, in *Hebron* (compare <sup><4139></sup>Luke 1:39,42,44, with <sup><6211></sup>Joshua 21:11) or else in *Nazareth*, “in the territory” of *Israel*, to whom <sup><3805></sup>Jeremiah 31:5,6,15,18,21 refer; His *birth* was at Beth-lehem (<sup><3809></sup>Micah 5:2 <sup><4085></sup>Matthew 2:5,6). As the place of His nativity, and of His being reared (<sup><4123></sup>Matthew 2:23), and of His preaching (<sup><3709></sup>Haggai 2:7 <sup><3808></sup>Malachi 3:1), are specified, so it is likely the Holy Spirit designated the place of His being conceived.

(5) The *Hebrew* for “woman” implies an *individual*, as the Virgin Mary, rather than a *collection of persons*.

(6) The restoration of Israel is grounded on God’s covenant in *Christ*, to whom, therefore, allusion is naturally made as the foundation of Israel’s hope (compare <sup><2714></sup>Isaiah 7:14). The *Virgin Mary*’s conception of Messiah in the womb answers to the “Virgin of Israel” (therefore so called, <sup><3821></sup>Jeremiah 31:21), that is, Israel and her sons at their final restoration, receiving Jesus as Messiah (<sup><3820></sup>Zechariah 12:10).

(7) The reference to the conception of the *child* Messiah accords with the mention of the massacre of “children” referred to in <sup><3815></sup>Jeremiah 31:15 (compare <sup><4127></sup>Matthew 2:17).

(8) The *Hebrew* for “man” is properly “mighty man,” a term applied to *God* (<sup><5107></sup>Deuteronomy 10:17); and to *Christ* (<sup><3835></sup>Zechariah 13:7; compare <sup><988></sup>Psalms 45:3 <sup><2906></sup>Isaiah 9:6) [CALOVIUS].

23. Jerusalem again shall be the metropolis of the whole nation, the seat of “justice” (<sup><825></sup>Psalms 122:5-8 <sup><2103></sup>Isaiah 1:26), and of sacred worship (“holiness,” <sup><3808></sup>Zechariah 8:3) on “Mount” Moriah.

24. *Judah ... cities ... husbandmen ... they with flocks* — Two classes, Citizens and countrymen, the latter divided into agriculturists and shepherds, all alike in security, though the latter were to be outside the protection of city walls. “Judah” here stands for the *country*, as distinguished from its *cities*.

25. The “weary, sorrowful,” and indigent state of Israel will prove no obstacle in the way of My helping them.

26. The words of Jeremiah: *Upon this* (or, *By reason of this*) announcement of a happy restoration, “I awaked” from the prophetic



*dream* vouchsafed to me (<sup><3225></sup>Jeremiah 23:25) with the “sweet” impression thereof remaining on my mind. “Sleep” here means *dream*, as in <sup><3915></sup>Psalms 90:5.

27. He shows how a land so depopulated shall again be peopled. God will cause both *men* and *beasts* in it to increase to a multitude (<sup><3809></sup>Ezekiel 36:9-11 <sup><3223></sup>Hosea 2:23).

28. (<sup><3407></sup>Jeremiah 44:27). The same God who, as it were (in human language), was *on the watch* for all means to destroy, shall be as much on the watch for the means of their restoration.

29. *In those days* — after their punishment has been completed, and mercy again visits them.

*fathers ... eaten ... sour grape ... children's teeth ... on edge* — the proverb among the exiles' children born in Babylon, to express that they suffered the evil consequences of their fathers' sins rather than of their own (<sup><3807></sup>Lamentations 5:7 <sup><3802></sup>Ezekiel 18:2,3).

30. (<sup><3806></sup>Galatians 6:5,7).

31. *the days ... new covenant with ... Israel ... Judah* — The new covenant is made with literal *Israel* and *Judah*, not with the *spiritual* Israel, that is, believers, except secondarily, and as grafted on the stock of Israel (<sup><3116></sup>Romans 11:16-27). For the *whole* subject of the thirtieth and thirty-first chapters is the restoration of the Hebrews (<sup><3808></sup>Jeremiah 30:4,7,10,18 31:7,10,11,23,24,27,36). With the “remnant according to the election of grace” in Israel, the new covenant has already taken effect. But with regard to the whole nation, its realization is reserved for the last days, to which Paul refers this prophecy in an abridged form (<sup><3117></sup>Romans 11:27).

32. *Not ... the covenant that I made with ... fathers* — the Old Testament covenant, as contrasted with our gospel covenant (<sup><3808></sup>Hebrews 8:8-12 10:16,17, where this prophecy is quoted to prove the abrogation of the law by the gospel), of which the distinguishing features are its securing by an adequate atonement the forgiveness of sins, and by the inworking of effectual grace ensuring permanent obedience. An earnest of this is given partially in the present eclectic or elect Church gathered out of Jews and Gentiles. But the promise here to Israel in the last days is national and universal, and effected by an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit (<sup><3833></sup>Jeremiah 31:33,34 <sup><3817></sup>Ezekiel 11:17-20), independent of any merit on their part (<sup><3825></sup>Ezekiel 36:25-32 37:1-28 39:29 <sup><3823></sup>Joel 2:23-28 <sup><3820></sup>Zechariah 12:10 <sup><3806></sup>2 Corinthians 3:16).

*took ... by ... hand* — (<sup><3813></sup>Deuteronomy 1:31 <sup><3818></sup>Hosea 11:3).

**although I was an husband** — (compare <sup><2184></sup>Jeremiah 3:14 <sup><2107></sup>Hosea 2:7,8). But the *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and St. Paul (<sup><2109></sup>Hebrews 8:9) translate, “I regarded them not”; and GESENIUS, etc., justify this rendering of the *Hebrew* from the *Arabic*. The Hebrews *regarded not* God, so God *regarded them not*.

**33. will be their God** — (<sup><2123></sup>Jeremiah 32:38).

**34.** True, specially of Israel (<sup><2543></sup>Isaiah 54:13); secondarily, true of believers (<sup><2165></sup>John 6:45 <sup><2120></sup>1 Corinthians 2:10 <sup><2121></sup>1 John 2:20).

**forgive ... iniquity ... remember ... no more** — (<sup><2163></sup>Jeremiah 33:8 50:20 <sup><2178></sup>Micah 7:18); applying peculiarly to Israel (<sup><2127></sup>Romans 11:27).  
Secondarily, all believers (<sup><2103></sup>Acts 10:43).

**35. divideth ... sea when ... waves ... roar ... Lord of hosts ... name** — quoted from <sup><2515></sup>Isaiah 51:15, the genuineness of which passage is thus established on Jeremiah’s authority.

**36. a nation** — Israel’s *national* polity has been broken up by the Romans. But their preservation as a *distinct people* amidst violent persecutions, though scattered among all nations for eighteen centuries, *unamalgamated*, whereas all other peoples under such circumstances have become incorporated with the nations in which they have been dispersed, is a perpetual standing miracle (compare <sup><2163></sup>Jeremiah 33:20 <sup><2130></sup>Psalms 148:6 <sup><2549></sup>Isaiah 54:9,10).

**37.** (Compare <sup><2122></sup>Jeremiah 33:22).

**for all that they have done** — namely, all the sins. God will regard His own covenant promise, rather than their merits.

**38. tower of Hananeel** — The city shall extend beyond its former bounds (<sup><2100></sup>Nehemiah 3:1 12:39 <sup><2140></sup>Zechariah 14:10).

**gate of ... corner** — (<sup><2143></sup>2 Kings 14:13 <sup><2109></sup>2 Chronicles 26:9).

**39. measuring-line** — (<sup><2108></sup>Ezekiel 40:8 <sup><2105></sup>Zechariah 2:1).

**Gareb** — from a *Hebrew* root, “to scrape”; *Syriac*, “leprosy”; the locality outside of the city, to which *lepers* were removed.

**Goath** — from a root, “to toil,” referring to the *toilsome* ascent there: outside of the city of David, towards the southwest, as Gareb was northwest [JUNIUS].

**40. valley of ... dead** — Tophet, where the bodies of malefactors were cast (<sup><2133></sup>Isaiah 30:33), south of the city.

*fields ... Kidron* — so <sup><1234></sup>2 Kings 23:4. Fields in the suburbs reaching as far as Kidron, east of the city.

*horse gate* — Through it the king's horses were led forth for watering to the brook Kidron (<sup><12116></sup>2 Kings 11:16 <sup><14133></sup>Nehemiah 3:28).

*for ever* — The city shall not only be spacious, but both “holy to the Lord,” that is, freed from all pollutions, and *everlasting* (<sup><2187></sup>Joel 3:17,20 <sup><1611></sup>Revelation 21:2,10,27).

# CHAPTER 32

## ◀JEREMIAH 32:1-14.

### JEREMIAH, IMPRISONED FOR HIS PROPHECY AGAINST JERUSALEM, BUYS A PATRIMONIAL PROPERTY (HIS RELATIVE HANAMEEL'S), IN ORDER TO CERTIFY TO THE JEWS THEIR FUTURE RETURN FROM BABYLON.

1. **tenth year** — The siege of Jerusalem had already begun, in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah (◀JEREMIAH 39:1 ▶2 KINGS 25:1).
2. **in ... court of ... prison** — that is, in the open space occupied by the guard, from which he was not allowed to depart, but where any of his friends might visit him (◀JEREMIAH 32:12 ▶JEREMIAH 38:13,28). Marvellous obstinacy, that at the time when they were experiencing the truth of Jeremiah's words in the pressure of the siege, they should still keep the prophet in confinement [CALVIN]. The circumstances narrated (◀JEREMIAH 32:3-5) occurred at the beginning of the siege, when Jeremiah foretold the capture of the city (◀JEREMIAH 32:1 ▶JEREMIAH 34:1-7 39:1). He was at that time put into free custody in the court of the prison. At the raising of the siege by Pharaoh-hophra, Jeremiah was on the point of repairing to Benjamin, when he was cast into "the dungeon," but obtained leave to be removed again to the court of the prison (◀JEREMIAH 37:12-21). When there he urged the Jews, on the second advance of the Chaldeans to the siege, to save themselves by submission to Nebuchadnezzar (◀JEREMIAH 38:2,3); in consequence of this the king, at the instigation of the princes, had him cast into a miry dungeon (◀JEREMIAH 38:4-6); again he was removed to the prison court at the intercession of a courtier (◀JEREMIAH 32:7-13), where he remained till the capture of the city (◀JEREMIAH 32:28), when he was liberated (◀JEREMIAH 39:11, etc. ▶JEREMIAH 40:1, etc.).
4. **his eyes shall behold his eyes** — that is, only *before* reaching Babylon, which he was *not to see*. ▶JEREMIAH 39:6,7 harmonizes this prophecy (◀JEREMIAH 32:4) with the seemingly opposite prophecy, ▶EZEKIEL 12:13, "He shall *not see*."

5. *visit him* — in a good sense (<sup>3072</sup>Jeremiah 27:22); referring to the honor paid Zedekiah at his death and burial (<sup>3604</sup>Jeremiah 34:4,5). Perhaps, too, before his death he was treated by Nebuchadnezzar with some favor.

*though ye fight ... shall not prosper* — (<sup>2204</sup>Jeremiah 21:4).

6. *Jeremiah said* — resuming the thread of <sup>2616</sup>Jeremiah 32:1, which was interrupted by the parenthesis (<sup>2612</sup>Jeremiah 32:2-5).

7. *son of Shallum thine uncle* — therefore, Jeremiah's first cousin.

*field ... in Anathoth* — a sacerdotal city: and so having one thousand cubits of suburban fields outside the wall attached to it (<sup>4834</sup>Numbers 35:4,5). The prohibition to sell these suburban fields (<sup>4824</sup>Leviticus 25:34) applied merely to their alienating them from Levites to another tribe; so that this chapter does not contravene that prohibition. Besides, what is here meant is only the purchase of the use of the field till the year of jubilee. On the failure of the owner, the next of kin had the right of redeeming it (<sup>4825</sup>Leviticus 25:25, etc. <sup>4848</sup>Ruth 4:3-6).

8. *Then I knew* — Not that Jeremiah previously doubted the reality of the divine communication, but, the effect following it, and the prophet's experimentally knowing it, confirmed his faith and was the seal to the vision. The Roman historian, FLORUS (2.6), records a similar instance: During the days that Rome was being besieged by Hannibal, the very ground on which he was encamped was put up for sale at Rome, and found a purchaser; implying the calm confidence of the ultimate issue entertained by the Roman people.

9. *seventeen shekels of silver* — As the shekel was only about fifty cents, the whole would be under \$10, a rather small sum, even taking into account the fact of the Chaldean occupation of the land, and the uncertainty of the time when it might come to Jeremiah or his heirs. Perhaps the "seven shekels," which in the *Hebrew* (see *Margin*) are distinguished from the "ten pieces of silver," were shekels of *gold* [MAURER].

10. *subscribed* — *I wrote* in the deed, "book of purchase" (<sup>2612</sup>Jeremiah 32:12).

*weighed* — coined money was not in early use; hence money was "weighed" (<sup>4236</sup>Genesis 23:16).

11. *evidence ... sealed ... open* — Two deeds were drawn up in a contract of sale; the one, the original copy, witnessed and sealed with the public seal; the other not so, but open, and therefore less authoritative, being but a *copy*. GATAKER thinks that the purchaser sealed the one with *his own* seal; the

other he showed to witnesses that they might write their names on the back of it and know the contents; and that some details, for example, the conditions and time of redemption were in the *sealed* copy, which the parties might not choose to be known to the witnesses, and which were therefore not in the *open* copy. The sealed copy, when opened after the seventy years' captivity, would greatly confirm the faith of those living at that time. The "law and custom" refer, probably, not merely to the sealing up of the conditions and details of purchase, but also to the law of redemption, according to which, at the return to Judea, the deed would show that Jeremiah had bought the field by his right as next of kin (<sup><4833></sup>Leviticus 25:13-16), [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU].

**12. *Baruch*** — Jeremiah's amanuensis and agent (<sup><2804></sup>Jeremiah 36:4, etc.).

***before all*** — In sales everything clandestine was avoided; publicity was required. So here, in the court of prison, where Jeremiah was confined, there were soldiers and others, who had free access to him, present (<sup><2801></sup>Jeremiah 38:1).

**14. *in an earthen vessel*** — that the documents might not be injured by the moisture of the surrounding earth; at the same time, being buried, they could not be stolen, but would remain as a pledge of the Jews' deliverance until God's time should come.

**15.** (Compare <sup><4824></sup>Jeremiah 32:24,25,37,43,44).

**16.** Jeremiah, not comprehending how God's threat of destroying Judah could be reconciled with God's commanding him to purchase land in it as if in a free country, has recourse to his grand remedy against perplexities, prayer.

**17. *hast made ... heaven*** — Jeremiah extols God's creative power, as a ground of humility on his part as man: It is not my part to call Thee, the mighty God, to account for Thy ways (compare <sup><3411></sup>Jeremiah 12:1).

***too hard*** — In <sup><4827></sup>Jeremiah 32:27 God's reply exactly accords with Jeremiah's prayer (<sup><4184></sup>Genesis 18:14 <sup><3805></sup>Zechariah 8:6 <sup><4137></sup>Luke 1:37).

**18.** (<sup><4184></sup>Exodus 34:7 <sup><2816></sup>Isaiah 65:6). This is taken from the decalogue (<sup><4201></sup>Exodus 20:5,6). This is a second consideration to check hasty judgments as to God's ways: Thou art the gracious and righteous Judge of the world.

**19. *counsel ... work*** — devising ... executing (<sup><2889></sup>Isaiah 28:29).

***eyes ... open upon all*** — (<sup><4321></sup>Job 34:21 <sup><4121></sup>Proverbs 5:21).

*to give ... according to ... ways* — (<sup>2470</sup>Jeremiah 17:10).

**20. *even unto this day*** — Thou hast given “signs” of Thy power from the day when Thou didst deliver Israel out of Egypt by mighty miracles, down to the present time [MAURER]. CALVIN explains it, “memorable even unto this day.”

*among other men* — not in Israel only, but among foreign peoples also. Compare for “other” understood, (<sup>4918</sup>Psalm 73:5).

*made thee a name* — (<sup>1096</sup>Exodus 9:16 <sup>4372</sup>1 Chronicles 17:21 <sup>2382</sup>Isaiah 63:12).

*as at this day* — *a name* of power, such as Thou hast at this day.

**21.** (<sup>4961</sup>Psalm 136:11,12).

**22. *given ... didst swear*** — God gave it by a gratuitous covenant, not for their deserts.

*a land flowing with milk and honey* — (See on <sup>4448</sup>Numbers 14:8).

**23. *all ... thou commandedst ... all this evil*** — Their punishment was thus exactly commensurate with their sin. It was not fortuitous.

**24. *mounds*** — mounds of earth raised as breastworks by the besieging army, behind which they employed their engines, and which they gradually pushed forward to the walls of the city.

*behold, thou seest it* — connected with <sup>3825</sup>Jeremiah 32:25. Thou seest all this with Thine own eyes, and yet (what seems inconsistent with it) Thou commandest me to buy a field.

**25. *for the city***, etc. — rather, “though,” etc.

**27.** Jehovah retorts Jeremiah’s own words: I am indeed, as thou sayest (Jeremiah 32: 17), the God and Creator of “all flesh,” and “nothing is too hard for Me”; thine own words ought to have taught thee that, though Judea and Jerusalem are given up to the Chaldeans now for the sins of the Jews, yet it will not be *hard* to Me, when I please, to restore the state so that houses and lands therein shall be possessed in safety (<sup>2826</sup>Jeremiah 32:36-44).

**29. *burn ... houses upon whose roofs ... incense unto Baal*** — retribution in kind. They *burnt incense to Baal, on the houses*, so the *houses* shall be *burnt* (<sup>2493</sup>Jeremiah 19:13). The god of fire was the object of their worship; so fire shall be the instrument of their punishment.

**to provoke me** — indicating the *design*, not merely the *event*. They seemed to court God’s “anger,” and *purposely* to “provoke” Him.

**30. have ... done** — literally, “have been doing”; implying *continuous* action.

**only ... evil ... only provoked me** — They have been doing *nothing else but* evil; their *sole* aim seems to have been to provoke Me.

**their youth** — the time when they were in the wilderness, having just before come into national existence.

**31. provocation of mine anger** — literally, “*for* mine anger.” CALVIN, therefore, connects those words with those at the end of the verse, “this city has been to me an *object for mine anger* (namely, by reason of the provocations mentioned, <sup><4820></sup>Jeremiah 32:30, etc.), that I should remove it,” etc. Thus, there will not be the repetition of the sentiment, <sup><4821></sup>Jeremiah 32:30, as in *English Version*; the *Hebrew* also favors this rendering. However, Jeremiah delights in repetitions. In *English Version* the words, “that I should remove it,” etc., stand independently, as the result of what precedes. The time is ripe for taking vengeance on them (<sup><4822></sup>2 Kings 23:27).

**from the day that they built it** — Solomon completed the building of the city; and it was he who, first of the Jewish kings, turned to idolatry. It was originally built by the idolatrous Canaanites.

**32. priests ... prophets** — (<sup><4823></sup>Nehemiah 9:32,34). Hence, learn, though ministers of God apostatize, we must remain faithful.

**33.** (<sup><4824></sup>Jeremiah 2:27 7:13).

**34.** (<sup><4825></sup>Jeremiah 7:30 31 <sup><4826></sup>Ezekiel 8:5-17).

**35. cause ... pass through ... fire** — By way of purification, they passed through with bare feet (<sup><4827></sup>Leviticus 18:21).

**Molech** — meaning “king”; the same as *Milcom* (<sup><4828></sup>1 Kings 11:33).

**I commanded ... not** — This cuts off from the superstitious the plea of a good intention. All “will-worship” exposes to God’s wrath (<sup><4829></sup>Colossians 2:18,23).

**36. And now therefore** — rather, “But now, nevertheless.” Notwithstanding that their guilt deserves lasting vengeance, God, for the elect’s sake and for His covenant’s sake, will, contrary to all that might have been expected, restore them.



*ye say, It shall be delivered into ... king of Babylon* — The reprobate pass from the extreme of self-confidence to that of despair of God's fulfilling His promise of restoring them.

37. (See on <sup><2465></sup>Jeremiah 16:15). The "all" countries implies a future restoration of Israel more universal than that from Babylon.

38. (<sup><2402></sup>Jeremiah 30:22 24:7).

39. *one heart* — all seeking the Lord *with one accord*, in contrast to their state when only scattered individuals sought Him (<sup><3419></sup>Ezekiel 11:19,20 <sup><3409></sup>Zephaniah 3:9).

*for ... good of them* — (<sup><3942></sup>Psalm 34:12-15).

40. (<sup><2433></sup>Jeremiah 31:31,33 <sup><2508></sup>Isaiah 55:3).

*not depart from me* — never yet fully realized as to the Israelites.

*I will not turn away from them ... good* — (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 30:21). Jehovah compares Himself to a sedulous preceptor following his pupils everywhere to direct their words, gestures.

*put my fear in ... hearts ... not depart from me* — Both the conversion and perseverance of the saints are the work of God alone, by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

41. *rejoice over them* — (<sup><4509></sup>Deuteronomy 30:9 <sup><2635></sup>Isaiah 62:5 65:19 <sup><3407></sup>Zephaniah 3:17).

*plant ... assuredly* — rather, "in stability," that is, permanently, for ever (<sup><2448></sup>Jeremiah 24:6 <sup><3095></sup>Amos 9:15).

42. (<sup><2428></sup>Jeremiah 31:28). The restoration from Babylon was only a slight foretaste of the grace to be expected by Israel at last through Christ.

43. (<sup><2425></sup>Jeremiah 32:15).

*whereof ye say, It is desolate* — (<sup><2430></sup>Jeremiah 33:10).

44. Referring to the forms of contract (<sup><2420></sup>Jeremiah 32:10-12):

*Benjamin* — specified as Anathoth; Jeremiah's place of residence where the field lay (<sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 32:8), was in it.

# CHAPTER 33

## ◀331▶ JEREMIAH 33:1-26.

### PROPHECY OF THE RESTORATION FROM BABYLON, AND OF MESSIAH AS KING AND PRIEST.

1. *shut up* — (◀332▶ Jeremiah 32:2,3 ▶333▶ 2 Timothy 2:9). Though Jeremiah was shut up in bondage, the word of God was “not bound.”

2. *maker thereof* — rather, “the doer of it,” namely, that which Jeremiah is about to prophesy, the restoration of Israel, an act which is thought now impossible, but which the Almighty will effect.

*formed it* — namely, Jerusalem (◀334▶ Jeremiah 32:44) [CALVIN]. Rather, “that formed,” that is, moulds *His purpose* into due shape for execution (◀335▶ Isaiah 37:26).

*Lord ... his name* — (◀336▶ Exodus 3:14,15).

3. *Call ... I will answer* — (◀337▶ Jeremiah 29:12 ▶338▶ Psalm 91:15). Jeremiah, as the representative of the people of God, is urged by God to pray for that which God has determined to grant; namely, the restoration. God’s promises are not to slacken, but to quicken the prayers of His people (◀339▶ Psalm 132:13,17 ▶340▶ Isaiah 62:6,7).

*mighty things* — *Hebrew*, “inaccessible things,” that is, incredible, hard to man’s understanding [MAURER], namely, the restoration of the Jews, an event despaired of. “Hidden,” or “recondite” [PISCATOR].

*thou knowest not* — Yet God had revealed those things to Jeremiah, but the unbelief of the people in rejecting the grace of God had caused him to forget God’s promise, as though the case of the people admitted of no remedy.

4. *houses ... thrown down by the mounds* — namely, by the missiles cast from the besiegers’ *mounds* (◀341▶ Jeremiah 32:24); “and by the sword” follows properly, as, after missiles had prepared the way, the foe next advanced to close quarters “with the sword.”

5. *They* — the Jews; the defenders of the “houses” (◀342▶ Jeremiah 33:4), “come forward to fight with the Chaldeans,” who burst into the city

through the “thrown-down houses,” but all the effect that they produce “is, to fill them (the houses) with their own “dead bodies.”

6. (<sup>2817</sup>Jeremiah 30:17). The answer to Jeremiah’s mournful question (<sup>2482</sup>Jeremiah 8:22).

**cure** — literally, the long linen bandage employed in dressing wounds.

**truth** — that is, stability; I will bring forth for them abundant and *permanent* peace, that is, prosperity.

7. **cause ... to return** — that is, reverse (<sup>2831</sup>Jeremiah 33:11 <sup>2834</sup>Jeremiah 32:44). The specification, both of “Judah” and “Israel,” can only apply fully to the future restoration.

**as at the first** — (<sup>2905</sup>Isaiah 1:26).

8. **cleanse** — (<sup>2865</sup>Ezekiel 36:25 <sup>2815</sup>Zechariah 13:1 <sup>2803</sup>Hebrews 9:13,14). Alluding to the legal rites of purification.

**all their iniquity ... all their iniquities** — both the *principle* of sin within, and its outward manifestations in *acts*. The repetition is in order that the Jews may consider how great is the grace of God in not merely *pardon*ing (as to the punishment), but also *cleansing* them (as to the pollution of guilt); not merely one iniquity, but *all* (<sup>2978</sup>Micah 7:18).

9. **it** — the city.

**a name ... a praise** — (<sup>2831</sup>Jeremiah 13:11 <sup>2807</sup>Isaiah 62:7).

**them** — the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

**they shall fear ... for all the goodness** — (<sup>2804</sup>Psalm 130:4). The Gentiles shall be led to “fear” God by the proofs of His power displayed in behalf of the Jews; the ungodly among them shall “tremble” for fear of God’s judgments on them; the penitent shall reverentially fear and be converted to Him (<sup>2925</sup>Psalm 102:15 <sup>2803</sup>Isaiah 60:3).

10. **ye say ... desolate** — (<sup>2836</sup>Jeremiah 32:43).

11. (<sup>2973</sup>Jeremiah 7:34 16:9).

**Praise the Lord**, etc. — the words of <sup>2801</sup>Psalm 136:1, which were actually used by the Jews at their restoration (<sup>2831</sup>Ezra 3:11).

**sacrifice of praise** — (<sup>2972</sup>Psalm 107:22 116:17). This shall continue when all other sacrifices shall be at an end.

**12. habitation of shepherds ... flocks** — in contrast to <sup><2630></sup>Jeremiah 33:10, “without man ... *inhabitant* ... without *beast*” (<sup><2634></sup>Jeremiah 32:43; compare <sup><2624></sup>Jeremiah 31:24 <sup><2650></sup>50:19 <sup><2650></sup>Isaiah 65:10).

**13. pass ... under ... hands of him that telleth them** — Shepherds, in sending forth and bringing back their sheep to the folds, *count* them by striking each as it passes with a rod, implying the shepherd’s provident care that not one should be lost (<sup><1273></sup>Leviticus 27:32 <sup><3174></sup>Micah 7:14; compare <sup><3103></sup>John 10:28,29 <sup><1712></sup>17:12).

**14. perform** — “I will make to *rise*”; God’s promise having for a time seemed to “lie” dead and abortive [CALVIN].

**15.** Repeated from <sup><2275></sup>Jeremiah 23:5.

**the land** — the Holy Land: Israel and Judah (<sup><2216></sup>Jeremiah 23:6).

**16. Jerusalem** — In <sup><2275></sup>Jeremiah 23:6, instead of this, it is “Israel.” “*The name*” in the *Hebrew* has here to be supplied from that passage; and for “he” (Messiah, the antitypical “Israel”), the antecedent there (<sup><2448></sup>Isaiah 49:3), we have “she” here, that is, Jerusalem. She is called by the same name as Messiah, “The Lord Our Righteousness,” by virtue of the mystical oneness between her (as the literal representative of the spiritual Church) and her Lord and Husband. Thus, whatever belongs to the Head belongs also to the members (<sup><4450></sup>Ephesians 5:30,32). Hence, the Church is called “Christ” (<sup><5407></sup>Romans 16:7 <sup><4221></sup>1 Corinthians 12:12). The Church hereby professes to draw all her righteousness from Christ (<sup><2452></sup>Isaiah 45:24,25). It is for the sake of Jerusalem, literal and spiritual, that God the Father gives this name (*Jehovah, Tsidkenu*, “The Lord our Righteousness”) to Christ.

**17.** The promises of perpetuity of the throne of David fulfilled in Messiah, the son of David (<sup><1076></sup>2 Samuel 7:16 <sup><1104></sup>1 Kings 2:4 <sup><3904></sup>Psalms 89:4,29,36; compare <sup><403></sup>Luke 1:32,33).

**18.** Messiah’s literal priesthood (<sup><3077></sup>Hebrews 7:17,21,24-28), and His followers’ spiritual priesthood and sacrifices (<sup><2631></sup>Jeremiah 33:11 <sup><5121></sup>Romans 12:1 <sup><1516></sup>15:16 <sup><10151></sup>1 Peter 2:5,9 <sup><6009></sup>Revelation 1:6), shall never cease, according to the *covenant* with Levi, broken by the priests, but fulfilled by Messiah (<sup><4252></sup>Numbers 25:12,13 <sup><3404></sup>Malachi 2:4,5,8).

**20. covenant of the day** — that is, covenant *with* the day: answering to “covenant *with* David” (<sup><2622></sup>Jeremiah 33:21, also <sup><2625></sup>Jeremiah 33:25, “*with* day”; compare <sup><2635></sup>Jeremiah 31:35,36 <sup><1352></sup>Leviticus 26:42 <sup><3984></sup>Psalms 89:34,37).

22. (<sup><015F</sup>Genesis 15:5 22:17). The blessing there promised belonged to *all* the tribes; here it is restricted to the family of David and the tribe of Levi, because it was on these that the welfare of the whole people rested. When the kingdom and priesthood flourish in the person of Messiah, the whole nation shall temporally and spiritually prosper.

24. *this people* — certain of the Jews, especially those who spoke with Jeremiah in the court of the prison (<sup><042D</sup>Jeremiah 32:12 38:1).

*the two families* — Judah and Israel.

*before them* — in their judgment. They suppose that I have utterly cast off Israel so as to be no more a nation. The expression, “My people,” of itself, shows God has not cast off Israel for ever.

25. (<sup><2615F</sup>Jeremiah 31:35,36 <sup><0082</sup>Genesis 8:22 <sup><1740</sup>Psalms 74:16,17). I who have established the laws of nature am the same God who has made a covenant with the Church.

26. *Isaac* — (<sup><09A3D</sup>Psalms 105:9 <sup><00D</sup>Amos 7:9,16).

# CHAPTER 34

## ◀341▶ JEREMIAH 34:1-22.

### CAPTIVITY OF ZEDEKIAH AND THE PEOPLE FORETOLD FOR THEIR DISOBEDIENCE AND PERFDY.

The prophecy (◀341▶ Jeremiah 34:1-7) as to Zedekiah is an amplification of that in ◀341▶ Jeremiah 32:1-5, in consequence of which Jeremiah was then shut up in the court of the prison. The prophecy (◀341▶ Jeremiah 34:8-22) refers to the Jews, who, afraid of the capture of the city, had, in obedience to the law, granted freedom to their servants at the end of seven years, but on the intermission of the siege forced them back into bondage.

1. *Jerusalem and ... all the cities thereof* — (see on ▶341▶ Jeremiah 19:15). It was amazing blindness in the king, that, in such a desperate position, he should reject admonition.

3. (◀341▶ Jeremiah 32:4).

4, 5. Mitigation of Zedekiah's punishment.

5. *the burnings of thy fathers* — Thy funeral shall be honored with the same burning of aromatic spices as there was at the funerals of thy fathers (◀444▶ 2 Chronicles 16:14 21:19). The honors here mentioned were denied to Jehoiakim (◀222▶ Jeremiah 22:18).

*Ah, lord!* — The Hebrews in their chronology (*Sederolam*) mention the wailing used over him, "Alas! King Zedekiah is dead, drinking the dregs (that is, paying the penalty for the sins) of former ages."

7. *these ... retained* — alone (compare ▶441▶ 2 Chronicles 11:5,9).

8. By the law a *Hebrew*, after having been a bond-servant for six years, on the seventh was to be let go free (◀122▶ Exodus 21:22 ▶512▶ Deuteronomy 15:12).

*Zedekiah made a covenant* — with solemn ceremonial in the temple (◀341▶ Jeremiah 34:15,18,19).

*them* — bond-servants (◀341▶ Jeremiah 34:9).

9. *none ... serve himself of a Jew* — (◀125▶ Leviticus 25:39-46).

**11.** During the interruption of the siege by Pharaoh-hophra (compare <sup><282></sup>Jeremiah 34:21,22, with <sup><260></sup>Jeremiah 37:5-10), the Jews reduced their servants to bondage again.

**13.** The last year of Zedekiah was the sabbatical year. How just the retribution, that they who, against God's law and their own covenant, enslaved their brethren, should be doomed to bondage themselves: and that the bond-servants should enjoy the sabbatical freedom at the hands of the foe (<sup><252></sup>Jeremiah 52:16) which their own countrymen denied them!

**14. *At the end of seven years*** — that is, not on the *eighth* year, but within the limit of the seventh year, not later than the end of the seventh year (<sup><202></sup>Exodus 21:2 23:10 <sup><652></sup>Deuteronomy 15:12). So “at the end of three years” (<sup><640></sup>Deuteronomy 14:28 <sup><280></sup>2 Kings 18:10), and “*after three days*, I will rise again” (<sup><426></sup>Matthew 27:63), that is, on the *third day* (compare <sup><426></sup>Matthew 27:64).

**15. *in the house ... called by my name*** — the usual place of making such covenants (<sup><228></sup>2 Kings 23:3; compare <sup><108></sup>1 Kings 8:31 <sup><409></sup>Nehemiah 10:29).

**16. *polluted my name*** — by violating your oath (<sup><220></sup>Exodus 20:7).

**17. *not ... proclaiming liberty*** — Though the Jews had ostensibly emancipated their bond-servants, they *virtually* did not do so by revoking the liberty which they had granted. God looks not to outward appearances, but to the sincere intention.

***I proclaim a liberty*** — retribution answering to the offense (<sup><402></sup>Matthew 7:2 18:32,33 <sup><407></sup>Galatians 6:7 <sup><501></sup>James 2:13). The Jews who would not give liberty to their brethren shall themselves receive “a liberty” calamitous to them. God will manumit them from His happy and safe service (<sup><301></sup>Psalms 121:3), which is real “liberty” (<sup><395></sup>Psalms 119:45 <sup><436></sup>John 8:36 <sup><487></sup>2 Corinthians 3:17), only to pass under the terrible bondage of other taskmasters, the “sword,” etc.

***to be removed*** — The *Hebrew* expresses *agitation* (see on <sup><245></sup>Jeremiah 15:4). Compare <sup><625></sup>Deuteronomy 28:25,48,64,65, as to the *restless agitation* of the Jews in their ceaseless removals from place to place in their dispersion.

**18. *passed between the parts thereof*** — The contracting parties in the “covenant” (not here the law in general, but their *covenant* made before God in His house to emancipate their slaves, <sup><248></sup>Jeremiah 34:8,9) passed through the parts of the animal cut in two, implying that they prayed so to be cut in sunder (<sup><425></sup>Matthew 24:51; *Greek*, “cut in two”) if they should break the covenant (<sup><0150></sup>Genesis 15:10,17).

**20. *I will even give*** — resuming the sentence begun, but not completed (<sup>2648</sup>Jeremiah 34:18), “I will give,” etc.

***seek their life*** — implacably: satisfied with nothing short of their blood; not content with booty.

***dead bodies*** — The breakers of the covenant shall be cut in pieces, as the calf between whose parts they passed.

**21. *gone up*** — that is, raised the siege in order to meet Pharaoh-hophra (<sup>2650</sup>Jeremiah 37:7-10). The departure of the Chaldeans was a kind of manumission of the Jews; but as their manumission of their bond-servants was recalled, so God revoked His manumission of them from the Chaldeans.

**22. *I will command*** — Nebuchadnezzar, impelled unconsciously by a divine instigation, returned on the withdrawal of the Egyptians.



# CHAPTER 35

## JEREMIAH 35:1-19.

### PROPHECY IN THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM, WHEN THE CHALDEANS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SYRIANS AND MOABITES, INVADED JUDEA.

By the obedience of the Rechabites to their father, Jeremiah condemns the disobedience of the Jews to God their Father. The Holy Spirit has arranged Jeremiah's prophecies by the *moral* rather than the chronological connection. From the history of an event fifteen years before, the Jews, who had brought back their manumitted servants into bondage, are taught how much God loves and rewards obedience, and hates and punishes disobedience.

2. **Rechabites** — a nomadic tribe belonging to the Kenites of Hemath (<sup><12551</sup>Chronicles 2:55), of the family of Jethro, or Hobab, Moses' father-in-law (<sup><12819</sup>Exodus 18:9, etc. <sup><14129</sup>Numbers 10:29-32 <sup><17016</sup>Judges 1:16). They came into Canaan with the Israelites, but, in order to preserve their independence, chose a life in tents without a fixed habitation (<sup><19516</sup>1 Samuel 15:6). Besides the branch of them associated with Judah and extending to Amalek, there was another section at Kadesh, in Naphtali (<sup><17011</sup>Judges 4:11,17). They seem to have been proselytes of the gate, Jonadab, son of Rechab, whose charge not to drink wine they so strictly obeyed, was zealous for God (<sup><12015</sup>2 Kings 10:15-23). The Nabatheans of Arabia observed the same rules [DIODORUS SICULUS, 19.94].

**bring ... into ... house of ... Lord** — because there were suitable witnesses at hand there from among the priests and chief men, as also because he had the power immediately to address the people assembled there (<sup><26513</sup>Jeremiah 35:13). It may have been also as a reproof of the priests, who drank wine freely, though commanded to refrain from it when in the discharge of their duties [CALVIN].

**chambers** — which were round about the temple, applied to various uses, for example, to contain the vestments, sacred vessels, etc.

3. **Jaazaniah** — the elder and chief of the clan.

**4. *man of God*** — a prophet (<sup><6530></sup>Deuteronomy 33:1 <sup><9027></sup>1 Samuel 2:27 <sup><1122></sup>1 Kings 12:22 <sup><1007></sup>2 Kings 4:7), also “a servant of God” in general (<sup><5461></sup>1 Timothy 6:11), one not his own, but God’s; one who has parted with all right in himself to give himself wholly to God (<sup><5187></sup>2 Timothy 3:17). He was so revered that none would call in question what was transacted in his chamber.

***keeper of the door*** — *Hebrew*, “of the vessel.” Probably the office meant is that of the priest who kept in charge the capitation money paid for the use of the temple and the votive offerings, such as silver vessels, etc. There were seven such keepers [GROTIUS]. Compare <sup><1239></sup>2 Kings 12:9 25:18 <sup><1398></sup>1 Chronicles 9:18,19, which support *English Version*.

***I said ... Drink*** — Jeremiah does not say, *The Lord* saith, Drink: for then they would have been bound to obey. Contrast the case in <sup><1137></sup>1 Kings 13:7-26.

**6. *Jonadab ... our father*** — that is, forefather and director, three hundred years before (<sup><1205></sup>2 Kings 10:15). They were called Rechabites, not Jonadabites, having received their name from Rechab *the father*, previously to their adopting the injunctions of Jonadab his *son*. This case affords no justification for slavish deference to the religious opinions of the Christian fathers: for Jonadab’s injunction only affected matters of the present life; moreover, it was not binding on their consciences, for they deemed it not unlawful to go to Jerusalem in the invasion (<sup><4551></sup>Jeremiah 35:11). What is praised here is not the father’s injunction, but the obedience of the sons [CALVIN].

**7. *tents*** — (<sup><1047></sup>Judges 4:17).

***live many days*** — according to the promise connected with the fifth commandment (<sup><1202></sup>Exodus 20:12 <sup><4109></sup>Ephesians 6:2,3).

***strangers*** — They were not of the stock of Jacob, but sojourners in Israel. Types of the children of God, pilgrims on earth, looking for heaven as their home: having little to lose, so that losing times cost them little alarm; sitting loose to what they have (<sup><5034></sup>Hebrews 10:34 11:9,10,13-16).

**8. *all that he ... charged us ... all our days, we ... wives ... sons ... daughters*** — unreserved obedience in all particulars, at all times, and on the part of all, without exception: in these respects Israel’s obedience to God was wanting. Contrast <sup><9153></sup>1 Samuel 15:20,21 <sup><4784></sup>Psalms 78:34-37,41,56,57.

**11. *Chaldeans ... Syrians*** — when Jehoiakim revolted from Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><1241></sup>2 Kings 24:1,2). Necessity sets aside all other laws. This is the Rechabites’ excuse for their seeming disobedience to Jonadab in

temporarily settling in a city. Herein was seen the prescient wisdom of Jonadab's commands; they could at a moment's notice migrate, having no land possessions to tie them.

**14. obey ... father's commandment: notwithstanding I** — (<sup><3008></sup>Malachi 1:6).

**rising early and speaking** — *God Himself speaking* late and early by His various ways of providence and grace.

**15.** In <sup><2655></sup>Jeremiah 35:15 and in <sup><4865></sup>2 Chronicles 36:15, a distinct mode of address is alluded to, namely, *God sending His servants*. (<sup><2481></sup>Jeremiah 18:11 25:5,6). I enjoined nothing unreasonable, but simply to serve Me, and I attached to the command a gracious promise, but in vain. If Jonadab's commands, which were arbitrary and not moral obligations in themselves, were obeyed, much more ought Mine, which are in themselves right.

**17. because I have spoken ... not heard ... I ... called ... not answered** — (<sup><3024></sup>Proverbs 1:24 <sup><2362></sup>Isaiah 65:12).

**19. not want a man to stand before me** — There shall always be left representatives of the clan *to worship Me* (<sup><2451></sup>Jeremiah 15:1,19); or, "before Me" means simple *existence*, for all things in existence are *in God's sight* (<sup><1889></sup>Psalms 89:36). The Rechabites returned from the captivity. WOLFF found traces of them in Arabia.

# CHAPTER 36

## ◀36▶ JEREMIAH 36:1-32.

### BARUCH WRITES, AND READS PUBLICLY JEREMIAH'S PROPHECIES COLLECTED IN A VOLUME. THE ROLL IS BURNT BY JEHOIAKIM, AND WRITTEN AGAIN BY BARUCH AT JEREMIAH'S DICTATION.

1. *fourth year* — The command to write the roll was given in the fourth year, but it was not read publicly till the fifth year. As Isaiah subjoined to his predictions a history of events confirming his prophecies (◀280▶ Isaiah 36:1-22 37:1-38 38:1-22 39:1-8), so Jeremiah also in the thirty-seventh through forty-third chapters; but he prefaces his history with the narrative of an incident that occurred some time ago, showing that he, not only by word, but in writing, and that twice, had testified all that he about to state. as having subsequently come to pass [GROTIUS]. At the end of Jehoiakim's third year, Nebuchadnezzar enrolled an army against Jerusalem and took it in the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth year, carrying away captive Jehoiakim, Daniel, etc. Jehoiakim returned the same year, and for three years was tributary: then he withheld tribute. Nebuchadnezzar returned and took Jerusalem, and carried off Jehoiakim, who died on the road. This harmonizes this chapter with ▶220◀ 2 Kings 24:1-20 and ▶200◀ Daniel 1:1-21. See on ▶229◀ Jeremiah 22:19.

2. *roll of a book* — a book formed of prepared skins made into a roll. Compare “volume of the book,” that is, the Pentateuch (◀340▶ Psalm 40:7). It does not follow that his prophecies were not before committed to writing; what is implied is, they were now written together in *one* volume, so as to be read continuously to the Jews in the temple.

*against ... nations* — (◀255▶ Jeremiah 25:15, etc.).

*from ... days of Josiah* — (◀253▶ Jeremiah 25:3). From Josiah's thirteenth year (◀340▶ Jeremiah 1:2).

3. *hear* — consider seriously.

*return ... from ... evil way* — (Jon 3:8).

**4. all ... words of ... Lord** — God specially suggesting what might otherwise have escaped his memory, and directing the choice of words, as well as the substance (<sup><484></sup>John 14:26 16:13).

**5. I am shut up** — not in prison, for there is no account of his imprisonment under Jehoiakim, and <sup><2889></sup>Jeremiah 36:19,26 are inconsistent with it: but, “*I am prevented*,” namely, by some hindrance; or, through fear of the king, to whose anger Baruch was less exposed, as not being the author of the prophecy.

**6. go** — on the following year (<sup><2889></sup>Jeremiah 36:9).

**fasting day** — (See <sup><2889></sup>Jeremiah 36:9). An extraordinary fast, in the *ninth* month (whereas the fast on the great day of atonement was on the tenth day of the *seventh* month, <sup><1862></sup>Leviticus 16:29 23:27-32), appointed to avert the impending calamity, when it was feared Nebuchadnezzar, having in the year before (that is, the fourth of Jehoiakim), smitten Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish, would attack Judea, as the ally of Egypt (<sup><1234></sup>2 Kings 23:34,35). The fast was likely to be an occasion on which Jeremiah would find the Jews more softened, as well as a larger number of them met together.

**7. present ... supplication** — literally, “supplication shall fall”; alluding to the *prostrate attitude* of the supplicants (<sup><1025></sup>Deuteronomy 9:25 <sup><1058></sup>Matthew 26:39), as petitioners fall at the feet of a king in the East. So *Hebrew*, <sup><4835></sup>Jeremiah 38:26 <sup><2098></sup>Daniel 9:18, *Margin*.

**9. they proclaimed ... to all the people ... to all**, etc. — rather, “all the people ... all the people proclaimed a fast” [MICHAELIS]. The chiefs appointed the fast by the wish of the people. In either version the ungodly king had no share in appointing the fast.

**10. chamber** — Baruch read from the window or balcony of the chamber looking into the court where the people were assembled. However, some of the chambers were large enough to contain a considerable number (<sup><4318></sup>Nehemiah 13:5).

**Gemariah** — distinct from the Gemariah, son of Hilkiah, in <sup><2808></sup>Jeremiah 29:3.

**Shaphan** — the same person as in <sup><1228></sup>2 Kings 22:3.

**scribe** — secretary of state, or he who presided over the public records.

**higher court** — that of the priests, the court of the people being lower (<sup><1408></sup>2 Chronicles 4:9).

**new gate** — (<sup>2830</sup>Jeremiah 26:10). The east gate.

**12. scribe's chamber** — an apartment in the palace occupied by the secretary of state.

**princes** — holding a counsel of state at the time.

**Elnathan** — who had already been an instrument of evil in Jehoiakim's hand (<sup>2832</sup>Jeremiah 26:22,23).

**Hananiah** — the false prophet (<sup>2830</sup>Jeremiah 28:10-17).

**14. Jehudi** — of a good family, as appears from his pedigree being given so fully, but in a subordinate position.

**come** — Instead of requiring Baruch to *come* to them, they ought to have *gone* to the temple, and there professed their penitence. But pride forbade it [CALVIN].

**16. afraid, both one and other** — *Hebrew*, “fear-stricken,” they turned to one another (compare <sup>4128</sup>Genesis 42:28). This showed, on their part, hesitancy, and some degree of fear of God, but not enough to make them willing to sacrifice the favor of an earthly king. We will surely tell the king — not the language of threatening but implying that the matter is of such moment that the king ought to be made acquainted with it, so as to seek some remedy against the divine anger.

**17.** What they wished to know was, whether what Baruch had read to them was written by him from memory after hearing Jeremiah repeating his prophecies continuously, or accurately from the prophet's own dictation.

**18. his mouth** — Baruch replies it was by the *oral* dictation of the prophet; <sup>2832</sup>Jeremiah 36:2 accords with this view, rather than with the notion that Jeremiah repeated his prophecies from manuscripts.

**ink** — his specification of the “ink” implies: I added nothing save the hand, pen, and ink.

**19.** Showing that they were not altogether without better feelings (compare <sup>2836</sup>Jeremiah 36:16,25).

**20. chamber** — There were chambers in the king's palace round the court or great hall, as in the temple (<sup>2830</sup>Jeremiah 36:10). The roll was “laid up” there for safekeeping, with other public records.

**21. sent Jehudi** — Note how unbelievers flee from God, and yet seek Him through some kind of involuntary impulse [CALVIN]. Jehudi seems to have been the king's ready tool for evil.

**22. *winter house*** — (<sup>3185</sup>Amos 3:15).

***ninth month*** — namely, of the religious year, that is, November or December.

***fire on ... hearth*** — rather, *the stove* was burning before him. In the East neither chimneys nor ovens are used, but, in cold weather, a brazen vessel containing burning charcoal; when the wood has burned to embers, a cover is placed over the pot to make it retain the heat.

**23. *three or four leaves*** — not distinct leaves as in a book, but the consecutive spaces on the long roll in the shape of *doors* (whence the *Hebrew* name is derived), into which the writing is divided: as the books of Moses in the synagogue in the present day are written in a long parchment rolled round a stick, the writing divided into columns, like pages.

***pen-knife*** — the writer's knife with which the reed, used as a pen, was mended. "He" refers to the king (<sup>2872</sup>Jeremiah 36:22). As often as Jehudi read three or four columns, the king cut asunder the part of the roll read; and so he treated the whole, until all the parts read consecutively were cut and burnt; <sup>2874</sup>Jeremiah 36:24, "*all these words*," implies that the *whole* volume was read through, not merely the first three or four columns (<sup>1218</sup>1 Kings 22:8).

**24.** The king and his "servants" were more hardened than the "princes" and councillors (see on <sup>2872</sup>Jeremiah 36:12; <sup>2874</sup>Jeremiah 36:14; <sup>2876</sup>Jeremiah 36:16). Contrast the humble fear exhibited by Josiah at the reading of the law (<sup>2211</sup>2 Kings 22:11).

**25.** (See on <sup>2876</sup>Jeremiah 36:16). The "nevertheless" aggravates the king's sin; though God would have drawn him back through their intercession, he persisted: judicial blindness and reprobation!

**26. *Hammelech*** — not as *Margin*, "of the king." Jehoiakim at this time (the fifth year of his reign) had no grown-up son: Jeconiah, his successor, was then a boy of eleven (compare <sup>1239</sup>2 Kings 23:36, with <sup>1218</sup>2 Kings 24:8).

***hid them*** — (<sup>1812</sup>Psalms 31:20 83:3 <sup>2371</sup>Isaiah 26:20).

**27. *roll, and ... words*** — that is, the roll of words.

**28. *all the former words*** — It is in vain that the ungodly resist the power of Jehovah: not one of His words shall fall to the ground (<sup>4158</sup>Matthew 5:18 <sup>4185</sup>Acts 9:5 5:39).

**29. *say to Jehoiakim*** — not in person, as Jeremiah was “hidden” (<sup>-3483</sup>Jeremiah 36:26), but by the written word of prophecy.

***saying, Why*** — This is what the king had desired to be said to Jeremiah if he should be found; kings often dislike the truth to be told them.

**30. *He shall have none to sit upon the throne*** — fulfilled (<sup>-12218</sup>2 Kings 24:8, etc. <sup>-12312</sup>2 Kings 25:1-30). He had *successors*, but not directly of his posterity, *except his son Jeconiah*, whose three months’ reign is counted as nothing. Zedekiah was not the son, but the uncle of Jeconiah, and was raised to the throne in contempt of him and his father Jehoiakim (<sup>-3423</sup>Jeremiah 22:30).

***dead body ... cast out*** — (<sup>-34218</sup>Jeremiah 22:18,19).

***day ... heat ... night ... frost*** — There are often these variations of temperature in the East between night and day (<sup>-1334</sup>Genesis 31:40).

**32. *added besides ... many like words*** — Sinners gain nothing but additional punishment by setting aside the word of Jehovah. The law was similarly rewritten after the first tables had been broken owing to Israel’s idolatry (<sup>-12219</sup>Exodus 32:19,34:1).



# CHAPTER 37

## ◀367▶ JEREMIAH 37:1-21.

**HISTORICAL SECTIONS, THIRTY-SEVENTH THROUGH FORTY-FOURTH CHAPTERS. THE CHALDEANS RAISE THE SIEGE TO GO AND MEET PHARAOH-HOPHRA. ZEDEKIAH SENDS TO JEREMIAH TO PRAY TO GOD IN BEHALF OF THE JEWS: IN VAIN, JEREMIAH TRIES TO ESCAPE TO HIS NATIVE PLACE, BUT IS ARRESTED. ZEDEKIAH ABATES THE RIGOR OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.**

1. *Coniah* — curtailed from Jeconiah by way of reproach.

*whom* — referring to Zedekiah, not to Coniah (◀1247▶ 2 Kings 24:17).

2. Amazing stupidity, that they were not admonished by the punishment of Jeconiah [CALVIN], (◀4682▶ 2 Chronicles 36:12,14)!

3. *Zedekiah ... sent* — fearing lest, in the event of the Chaldeans overcoming Pharaoh-hophra, they should return to besiege Jerusalem. See on ▶201▶ Jeremiah 21:1; that chapter chronologically comes in between the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth chapter. The message of the king to Jeremiah here in the thirty-seventh chapter is, however, somewhat earlier than that in the twenty-first chapter; here it is while the issue between the Chaldeans and Pharaoh was undecided; there it is when, after the repulse of Pharaoh, the Chaldeans were again advancing against Jerusalem; hence, while Zephaniah is named in both embassies, *Jehucal* accompanies him here, *Pashur* there. But, as Pashur and Jehucal are both mentioned in ▶361▶ Jeremiah 38:1,2, as hearing Jeremiah's reply, which is identical with that in ▶209▶ Jeremiah 21:9, it is probable the two messages followed one another at a short interval; that in this ▶363▶ Jeremiah 37:3, and the answer, ▶367▶ Jeremiah 37:7-10, being the earlier of the two.

*Zephaniah* — an abettor of rebellion against God (▶305▶ Jeremiah 29:25), though less virulent than many (▶309▶ Jeremiah 29:29), punished accordingly (▶352▶ Jeremiah 52:24-27).

4. *Jeremiah ... not put ... into prison* — He was no longer in the prison court, as he had been (▶343▶ Jeremiah 32:2 33:1), which passages refer to the

beginning of the siege, not to the time when the Chaldeans renewed the siege, after having withdrawn for a time to meet Pharaoh.

5. After this temporary diversion, caused by Pharaoh in favor of Jerusalem, the Egyptians returned no more to its help (<sup><1224></sup>2 Kings 24:7). Judea had the misfortune to lie between the two great contending powers, Babylon and Egypt, and so was exposed to the alternate inroads of the one or the other. Josiah, taking side with Assyria, fell in battle with Pharaoh-necho at Megiddo (<sup><1229></sup>2 Kings 23:29). Zedekiah, seeking the Egyptian alliance in violation of his oath, was now about to be taken by Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><1483></sup>2 Chronicles 36:13 <sup><3375></sup>Ezekiel 17:15,17).

7. **shall return** — without accomplishing any deliverance for you.

8. (<sup><362></sup>Jeremiah 34:22).

9. **yourselves** — *Hebrew*, “souls.”

10. **yet ... they** — Even a few wounded men would suffice for your destruction.

11. **broken up** — “gone up.”

12. **Benjamin** — to his own town, Anathoth.

**to separate himself** — *Margin* translates, “to slip away,” from a *Hebrew* root, “to be smooth,” so, to slip away as a slippery thing that cannot be held. But it is not likely the prophet of God would flee in a dishonorable way; and “in the midst of the people” rather implies open departure along with others, than clandestine slipping away by mixing with the crowd of departing people. Rather, it means, *to separate himself*, or *to divide his place of residence*, so as to live partly here, partly there, without fixed habitation, going to and fro among the people [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU]. MAURER translates, “to take his portion thence,” to realize the produce of his property in Anathoth [HENDERSON], or to take possession of the land which he bought from Hanameel [MAURER].

13. **ward** — that is, the “guard,” or “watch.”

**Hananiah** — whose death Jeremiah predicted (<sup><2036></sup>Jeremiah 28:16). The grandson in revenge takes Jeremiah into custody on the charge of *deserting* (“thou fallest away,” <sup><3689></sup>Jeremiah 38:19 <sup><1218></sup>1 Samuel 29:3) to the enemy. His prophecies gave color to the charge (<sup><2010></sup>Jeremiah 21:9 <sup><384></sup>4).

15. **scribe** — one of the court secretaries; often in the East part of the private house of a public officer serves as a prison.

**16. *dungeon ... cabins*** — The prison consisted of a *pit* (the “dungeon”) with *vaulted* cells round the sides of it. The “cabins,” from a root, “to bend one’s self.”

**17. *secretly*** — Zedekiah was ashamed to be seen by his courtiers consulting Jeremiah (<sup><4828></sup>John 12:43 5:44 19:38).

***thou shalt be delivered*** — Had Jeremiah consulted his earthly interests, he would have answered very differently. Contrast <sup><4064></sup>Jeremiah 6:14 <sup><2900></sup>Isaiah 30:10 <sup><2630></sup>Ezekiel 13:10.

**18. *What*** — In what respect have I offended?

**19. *Where are now your prophets*** — The event has showed them to be liars; and, as surely as the king of Babylon has come already, notwithstanding their prophecy, so surely shall he return.

**20. *be accepted*** — rather, “Let my supplication *be humbly presented*” (see on <sup><2407></sup>Jeremiah 36:7), [HENDERSON].

***lest I die there*** — in the subterranean dungeon (<sup><2576></sup>Jeremiah 37:16), from want of proper sustenance (<sup><2472></sup>Jeremiah 37:21). The prophet *naturally* shrank from death, which makes his *spiritual* firmness the more remarkable; he was ready to die rather than swerve from his duty [CALVIN].

**21. *court of the prison*** — (<sup><2612></sup>Jeremiah 32:2 38:13,28).

***bakers’ street*** — Persons in the same business in cities in the East commonly reside in the same street.

***all the bread ... spent*** — Jeremiah had bread supplied to him until he was thrown into the dungeon of Malchiah, at which time the bread in the city was spent. Compare this verse with <sup><2489></sup>Jeremiah 38:9; that time must have been very shortly before the capture of the city (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 52:6). God saith of His children, “In the days of famine they shall be satisfied” (<sup><4579></sup>Psalms 37:19 <sup><2396></sup>Isaiah 33:16). Honest reproof (<sup><2477></sup>Jeremiah 37:17), in the end often gains more favor than flattery (<sup><2183></sup>Proverbs 28:23).

# CHAPTER 38

## JEREMIAH 38:1-28.

### JEREMIAH PREDICTS THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM, FOR WHICH HE IS CAST INTO A DUNGEON, BUT IS TRANSFERRED TO THE PRISON COURT ON THE INTERCESSION OF EBED-MELECH, AND HAS A SECRET INTERVIEW WITH ZEDEKIAH.

All this was subsequent to his imprisonment in Jonathan's house, and his release on his interview with Zedekiah. The latter occurred *before* the return of the Chaldeans to the siege; the similar events in this chapter occurred *after* it.

1. **Jucal** — Jehucal (<sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 37:3).

**Pashur** — (<sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 21:1; compare <sup>209B</sup>Jeremiah 21:9 with <sup>268B</sup>Jeremiah 38:2). The deputation in <sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 21:1, to whom Jeremiah gave this reply, if not identical with the hearers of Jeremiah (<sup>268B</sup>Jeremiah 38:1), must have been sent just before the latter "heard" him speaking the same words. *Zephaniah* is not mentioned here as in <sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 21:1, but is so in <sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 37:3. *Jucal* is mentioned here and in the previous deputation (<sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 37:3), but not in <sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 21:1. *Shephatiah* and *Gedaliah* here do not occur either in <sup>200B</sup>Jeremiah 21:1 or <sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 37:3. The identity of his words in both cases is natural, when uttered, at a very short interval, and one of the hearers (*Pashur*) being present on both occasions.

**unto all the people** — They had free access to him in the court of the prison (<sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 32:12).

2. **life ... a prey** — He shall escape with his life; though losing all else in a shipwreck, he shall carry off his life as his gain, saved by his going over to the Chaldeans. (See on <sup>209B</sup>Jeremiah 21:9).

4. Had Jeremiah not had a divine commission, he might justly have been accused of treason; but having one, which made the result of the siege certain, he acted humanely as interpreter of God's will under the theocracy, in advising surrender (compare <sup>201B</sup>Jeremiah 26:11).

**5. *the king is not he*** — Zedekiah was a weak prince, and now in his straits afraid to oppose his princes. He hides his dislike of their overweening power, which prevented him shielding Jeremiah as he would have wished, under complimentary speeches. “It is not right that the king should deny aught to such faithful and wise statesmen”; the king is not such a one as to deny you your wishes [JEROME].

**6. *dungeon*** — literally, the “cistern.” It was not a subterranean prison as that in Jonathan’s house (<sup>2875</sup>Jeremiah 37:15), but a pit or cistern, which had been full of water, but was emptied of it during the siege, so that only “mire” remained. Such empty cisterns were often used as prisons (<sup>3811</sup>Zechariah 9:11); the depth forbade hope of escape.

***Hammelech*** — (<sup>2825</sup>Jeremiah 36:26). His son followed in the father’s steps, a ready tool for evil.

***sunk in the mire*** — Jeremiah herein was a type of Messiah (<sup>3981</sup>Psalms 69:2,14). “I sink in deep mire,” etc.

**7. *Ebed-melech*** — The *Hebrew* designation given this Ethiopian, meaning “king’s servant.” Already, even at this early time, God wished to show what good reason there was for calling the Gentiles to salvation. An Ethiopian stranger saves the prophet whom his own countrymen, the Jews, tried to destroy. So the Gentiles believed in Christ whom the Jews crucified, and Ethiopians were among the earliest converts (<sup>4120</sup>Acts 2:10,41 8:27-39). Ebed-melech probably was keeper of the royal harem, and so had private access to the king. The eunuchs over harems in the present day are mostly from Nubia or Abyssinia.

**8. *went forth ... and spake*** — not privately, but in public; a proof of fearless magnanimity.

**9. *die for hunger in the place where he is; for ... no ... bread in ... city*** — (Compare <sup>2872</sup>Jeremiah 37:21). He had heretofore got a piece of bread supplied to him. “Seeing that there is the *utmost want of bread* in the city, so that even if he were at large, there could *no more* be regularly supplied to him, much less now in a place where none remember or pity him, so that he is likely to die for hunger.” “No more bread,” that is, no more left of the *public store* in the city (<sup>2872</sup>Jeremiah 37:21); or, *all but* no bread left anywhere [MAURER].

**10. *with thee*** — *Hebrew*, “in thine hand,” that is, at “thy disposal” (<sup>3941</sup>1 Samuel 16:2). “From hence,” that is, from the gate of Benjamin where the king was sitting (<sup>2837</sup>Jeremiah 38:7).

**thirty men** — not merely to draw up Jeremiah, but to guard Ebed-melech against any opposition on the part of the princes (<sup><280E></sup>Jeremiah 38:1-4), in executing the king's command. Ebed-melech was rewarded for his faith, love, and courage, exhibited at a time when he might well fear the wrath of the princes, to which even the king had to yield (<sup><289G></sup>Jeremiah 39:16-18).

**11. cast clouts** — “torn clothes” [HENDERSON].

**rotten rags** — “worn-out garments.” God can make the meanest things His instruments of goodness to His people (<sup><402Z></sup>1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

**under ... armholes** — “under the joints of thine hands,” that is, where the fingers join the hand, the clothes being in order that the hands should not be cut by the cords [MAURER].

**13. court of ... prison** — Ebed-melech prudently put him there to be out of the way of his enemies.

**14. third entry** — The Hebrews in determining the position of places faced the *east*, which they termed “that which is in front”; the *south* was thus called “that which is on the right hand”; the *north*, “that which is on the left hand”; the *west*, “that which is behind.” So beginning with the *east* they might term it the *first* or principal entry; the *south* the *second* entry; the *north* the “*third* entry” of the outer or inner court [MAURER]. The third gate of the temple facing the palace; for through it the entrance lay from the palace into the temple (<sup><110B></sup>1 Kings 10:5,12). It was westward (<sup><139G></sup>1 Chronicles 26:16,18 <sup><349I></sup>2 Chronicles 9:11) [GROTIUS]. But in the future temple it is eastward (<sup><260E></sup>Ezekiel 46:1,2,8).

**15. wilt thou not hearken unto me** — Zedekiah does not answer this last query; the former one he replies to in <sup><283G></sup>Jeremiah 38:16. Rather translate, “Thou wilt not hearken to me.” Jeremiah judges so from the past conduct of the king. Compare <sup><288T></sup>Jeremiah 38:17 with <sup><288J></sup>Jeremiah 38:19.

**16. Lord ... made us this soul** — (<sup><257I></sup>Isaiah 57:16). Implying, “may my life (soul) be forfeited if I deceive thee” [CALVIN].

**17. princes** — (<sup><289B></sup>Jeremiah 39:3). He does not say “to the king himself,” for he was at Riblah, in Hamath (<sup><289E></sup>Jeremiah 39:5 <sup><127G></sup>2 Kings 25:6). “If thou go forth” (namely, to surrender; <sup><124D></sup>2 Kings 24:12 <sup><293G></sup>Isaiah 36:16), God foreknows future conditional contingencies, and ordains not only the end, but also the *means* to the end.

**19. afraid of the Jews** — more than of God (<sup><102E></sup>Proverbs 29:25 <sup><402Z></sup>John 9:22 12:43).

**mock me** — treat me injuriously (<sup><0304></sup>1 Samuel 31:4).

**22. women** — The very evil which Zedekiah wished to escape by disobeying the command to go forth shall befall him in its worst form thereby. Not merely the Jewish deserters shall “mock” him (<sup><0309></sup>Jeremiah 38:19), but the very “women” of his own palace and harem, to gratify their new lords, will taunt him. A noble king in sooth, to suffer thyself to be so imposed on!

**Thy friends** — *Hebrew*, “men of thy peace” (see <sup><0300></sup>Jeremiah 20:10 <sup><0409></sup>Psalms 41:9, *Margin*). The king’s ministers and the false prophets who misled him.

**sunk in ... mire** — proverbial for, Thou art involved by “thy friends” counsels in inextricable difficulties. The phrase perhaps alludes to <sup><0306></sup>Jeremiah 38:6; a just retribution for the treatment of Jeremiah, who literally “sank in the mire.”

**they are turned ... back** — Having involved thee in the calamity, they themselves shall provide for their own safety by deserting to the Chaldeans (<sup><0309></sup>Jeremiah 38:19).

**23. children** — (<sup><0306></sup>Jeremiah 39:6 41:10). “wives ... children ... thou”; an ascending climax.

**24. Let no man know** — If thou wilt not tell this to the people, I will engage thy safety.

**25.** Kings are often such only in title; they are really under the power of their subjects.

**26. presented** — literally, “made my supplication to fall”; implying supplication with humble prostration (see on <sup><0307></sup>Jeremiah 36:7).

**Jonathan’s house** — (<sup><0305></sup>Jeremiah 37:15), different from Malchiah’s dungeon (<sup><0306></sup>Jeremiah 38:6). This statement was true, though not the whole truth; the princes had no right to the information; no sanction is given by Scripture here to Jeremiah’s representation of this being the cause of his having come to the king. Fear drove him to it. Compare <sup><0100></sup>Genesis 20:2,12; on the other hand, <sup><0902></sup>1 Samuel 16:2,5.

**left off speaking with** — *Hebrew*, “were silent from him,” that is, withdrawing from him they left him quiet (<sup><0008></sup>1 Samuel 7:8, *Margin*).

**28. he was there when Jerusalem was taken** — These words are made the beginning of the thirty-ninth chapter by many; but the accents and sense support *English Version*.

# CHAPTER 39

## JEREMIAH 39:1-18.

### JERUSALEM TAKEN. ZEDEKIAH'S FATE. JEREMIAH CARED FOR. EBED-MELECH ASSURED.

This chapter consists of two parts: the first describes the capture of Jerusalem, the removal of the people to Babylon, and the fate of Zedekiah, and that of Jeremiah. The second tells of the assurance of safety to Ebed-melech.

1. *ninth year ... tenth month* — and on the tenth day of it (<sup>383H</sup>Jeremiah 52:4 <sup>221K</sup>2 Kings 25:1-4). From <sup>384E</sup>Jeremiah 39:2, “eleventh year ... fourth month ... ninth day,” we know the siege lasted one and a half years, excepting the suspension of it caused by Pharaoh. Nebuchadnezzar was present in the beginning of the siege, but was at Riblah at its close (<sup>384B</sup>Jeremiah 39:3,6; compare <sup>387F</sup>Jeremiah 38:17).

3. *sat* — expressing military occupation or encampment.

*middle gate* — the gate from the upper city (comprehending Mount Zion) to the lower city (*north* of the former and much lower); it was into the latter (the *north* side) that the Chaldeans forced an entry and took up their position opposite the gate of the “middle” wall, between the lower and upper city. Zedekiah fled in the opposite, that is, the south direction (<sup>384E</sup>Jeremiah 39:4).

*Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo* — proper names formed from those of the idols, Nergal and Nebo (<sup>273K</sup>2 Kings 17:30 <sup>240E</sup>Isaiah 46:1).

*Rab-saris* — meaning “chief of the eunuchs.”

*Rab-mag* — chief of the magi; brought with the expedition in order that its issue might be foreknown through his astrological skill. *Mag* is a Persian word, meaning “great,” “powerful.” The magi were a sacerdotal caste among the Medes, and supported the Zoroastrian religion.

4. *the king's garden* — The “gate” to it from the upper, city above was appropriated to the kings alone; stairs” led down from Mount Zion and the palace to the king's garden below (<sup>448S</sup>Nehemiah 3:15).



**two walls** — Zedekiah might have held the upper city longer, but want of provisions drove him to flee by the double wall south of Zion, towards the plains of Jericho (<sup>2805</sup>Jeremiah 39:5), in order to escape beyond Jordan to Arabia-Deserta. He broke an opening in the wall to get out (<sup>2922</sup>Ezekiel 12:12).

**5. Riblah** — north of Palestine (see <sup>2014</sup>Jeremiah 1:14 <sup>0641</sup>Numbers 34:11). Hamath is identified by commentators with Antioch, in Syria, on the Orontes, called Epiphania, from Antiochus Epiphanes.

**gave judgment upon him** — literally, “spake judgments with him,” that is, brought him to trial as a common criminal, not as a king. He had violated his oath (<sup>2673</sup>Ezekiel 17:13-19 <sup>1432</sup>2 Chronicles 36:13).

**6. slew ... sons ... before his eyes** — previous to his eyes being “put out” (<sup>2807</sup>Jeremiah 39:7); literally, “dug out.” The Assyrian sculptures depict the delight with which the kings struck out, often with their own hands, the eyes of captive princes. This passage reconciles <sup>2834</sup>Jeremiah 32:4, “his eyes shall behold his eyes”; with <sup>2623</sup>Ezekiel 12:13, “he shall not see Babylon, though he shall die there.”

**slew all ... nobles** — (<sup>2671</sup>Jeremiah 27:20).

**8. burned ... the houses** — (<sup>2822</sup>Jeremiah 52:12,13). Not immediately after the taking of the city, but in the month after, namely, the fifth month (compare <sup>2805</sup>Jeremiah 39:2). The delay was probably caused by the princes having to send to Riblah to know the king’s pleasure as to the city.

**9. remnant** — excepting the poorest (<sup>2830</sup>Jeremiah 39:10), who caused Nebuchadnezzar no apprehensions.

**those ... that fell to him** — the *deserters* were distrusted; or they may have been removed at their own request, lest the people should vent their rage on them as traitors, after the departure of the Chaldeans.

**rest ... that remained** — distinct from the previous “remnant”; *there* he means the remnant of those besieged in the city, whom Nebuchadnezzar spared; here, those scattered through various districts of the country which had not been besieged [CALVIN].

**10. left ... the poor ... which had nothing** — The poor have least to lose; one of the providential compensations of their lot. They who before had been stripped of their possessions by the wealthier Jews obtain, not only their own, but those of others.

**11.** Jeremiah's prophecies were known to Nebuchadnezzar through deserters (<sup>239D</sup>Jeremiah 39:9 38:19), also through the Jews carried to Babylon with Jeconiah (compare <sup>240E</sup>Jeremiah 40:2). Hence the king's kindness to him.

**12.** *look well to him* — *Hebrew*, “set thine eyes upon him”; provide for his well-being.

**13.** *Nebuzara-dan ... sent* — He was then at Ramah (<sup>240H</sup>Jeremiah 40:1).

**14.** *Gedaliah* — son of Ahikam, the former supporter of Jeremiah (<sup>239B</sup>Jeremiah 26:24). Gedaliah was the chief of the deserters to the Chaldeans, and was set over the remnant in Judea as one likely to remain faithful to Nebuchadnezzar. His residence was at Mizpah (<sup>240F</sup>Jeremiah 40:5).

*home* — the house of Gedaliah, wherein Jeremiah might remain as in a safe asylum. As in <sup>240E</sup>Jeremiah 40:1 Jeremiah is represented as “bound in chains” when he came to Ramah among the captives to be carried to Babylon, this release of Jeremiah is thought by MAURER to be distinct from that in <sup>240F</sup>Jeremiah 40:5,6. But he seems first to have been released from the court of the prison and to have been taken to Ramah, still in chains, and then committed in freedom to Gedaliah.

*dwelt among the people* — that is, was made free.

**15-18.** Belonging to the time when the city was not yet taken, and when Jeremiah was still in the court of the prison (<sup>238B</sup>Jeremiah 38:13). This passage is inserted here because it was now that Ebed-melech's good act (<sup>238D</sup>Jeremiah 38:7-12 <sup>205B</sup>Matthew 25:43) was to be rewarded in his deliverance.

**16.** *Go* — not literally, for he was in confinement, but figuratively.

*before thee* — in thy sight.

**17.** *the men of whom thou art afraid* — (<sup>238E</sup>Jeremiah 38:1,4-6). The courtiers and princes hostile to thee for having delivered Jeremiah shall have no power to hurt. Heretofore intrepid, he was now afraid; this prophecy was therefore the more welcome to him.

**18.** *life ... for a prey* — (See on <sup>239D</sup>Jeremiah 21:9; <sup>238E</sup>Jeremiah 38:2; <sup>240E</sup>Jeremiah 45:5).

*put ... trust in me* — (<sup>238D</sup>Jeremiah 38:7-9). Trust in God was the root of his fearlessness of the wrath of men, in his humanity to the prophet (<sup>239D</sup>1 Chronicles 5:20 <sup>237A</sup>Psalms 37:40). The “life” he thus risked was to be his

reward, being spared beyond all hope, when the lives of his enemies should be forfeited (“for a prey”).

# CHAPTER 40

## ☞ JEREMIAH 40:1-16.

### JEREMIAH IS SET FREE AT RAMAH, AND GOES TO GEDALIAH, TO WHOM THE REMNANT OF JEWS REPAIR. JOHANAN WARNS GEDALIAH OF ISHMAEL'S CONSPIRACY IN VAIN.

1. **word that came** — the heading of a new part of the book (the forty-first through forty-fourth chapters), namely, the prophecies to the Jews in Judea and Egypt after the *taking* of the city, blended with history. The prophecy does not begin till ☞Jeremiah 42:7, and the previous history is introductory to it.

**bound in chains** — Though released from the court of the prison (see on ☞Jeremiah 39:14), in the confusion at the burning of the city he seems to have been led away in chains with the other captives, and not till he reached Ramah to have gained full liberty. Nebuzara-dan had his quarters at Ramah, in Benjamin; and there he collected the captives previous to their removal to Babylon (☞Jeremiah 31:15). He in releasing Jeremiah obeyed the king's commands (☞Jeremiah 39:11). Jeremiah's "chains" for a time were due to the negligence of those to whom he had been committed; or else to Nebuzara-dan's wish to upbraid the people with their perverse ingratitude in imprisoning Jeremiah [CALVIN]; hence he addresses the people (*ye ... you*) as much as Jeremiah (☞Jeremiah 40:2,3).

2. The Babylonians were in some measure aware, through Jeremiah's prophecies (☞Jeremiah 39:11), that they were the instruments of God's wrath on His people.

3. **ye** — (See on ☞Jeremiah 40:1). His address is directed to the Jews as well as to Jeremiah. God makes the very heathen testify for Him against them (☞Deuteronomy 29:24,25).

4. **look well unto thee** — the very words of Nebuchadnezzar's charge (☞Jeremiah 39:12).

**all the land is before thee ... seemeth good** — (☞Genesis 20:15, Margin). Jeremiah alone had the option given him of staying where he pleased, when all the rest were either carried off or forced to remain there.

**5. *while he was not yet gone back*** — parenthetical. When Jeremiah hesitated whether it would be best for him to go, Nebuzara-dan proceeded to say, “Go, *then*, to Gedaliah,” (not as *English Version*, “Go back, *also*”), if thou preferrest (as Nebuzara-dan inferred from Jeremiah’s hesitancy) to stop here rather than go with me.

***victuals*** — (<sup>2336</sup>Isaiah 33:16).

***reward*** — rather, “a present.” This must have been a seasonable relief to the prophet, who probably lost his all in the siege.

**6. *Mizpah*** — in Benjamin, northwest of Jerusalem (<sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 41:5,6,9). Not the Mizpah in Gilead, beyond Jordan (<sup>4707</sup>Judges 10:17). Jeremiah showed his patriotism and piety in remaining in his country amidst afflictions and notwithstanding the ingratitude of the Jews, rather than go to enjoy honors and pleasures in a heathen court (<sup>5812</sup>Hebrews 11:24-26). This vindicates his purity of motive in his withdrawal (<sup>2672</sup>Jeremiah 37:12-14).

**7. *captains ... in the fields*** — The leaders of the Jewish army had been “scattered” throughout the country on the capture of Zedekiah (<sup>2618</sup>Jeremiah 52:8), in order to escape the notice of the Chaldeans.

**8. *Netophathite*** — from Netophah, a town in Judah (<sup>1032</sup>2 Samuel 23:28).

***Maachathite*** — from Maachathi, at the foot of Mount Hermon (<sup>4834</sup>Deuteronomy 3:14).

**9. *Fear not*** — They were afraid that they should not obtain pardon from the Chaldeans for their acts. He therefore assured them of safety by an oath.

***serve*** — literally, “to stand before” (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 40:10 <sup>2622</sup>Jeremiah 52:12), that is, to be at hand ready to execute the commands of the king of Babylon.

**10. *Mizpah*** — lying on the way between Babylon and Judah, and so convenient for transacting business between the two countries.

***As for me ... but ye*** — He artfully, in order to conciliate them, represents the burden of the service to the Chaldeans as falling on *him*, while *they* may freely gather their wine, fruits, and oil. He does not now add that these very fruits were to constitute the chief part of the tribute to be paid to Babylon: which, though fruitful in corn, was less productive of grapes, figs, and olives [HERODOTUS, 1.193]. The grant of “vineyards” to the “poor” (<sup>2690</sup>Jeremiah 39:10) would give hope to the discontented of enjoying the best fruits (<sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 40:12).

**11. Jews ... in Moab** — who had fled thither at the approach of the Chaldeans. God thus tempered the severity of His vengeance that a remnant might be left.

**13. in the fields** — not in the city, but scattered in the country (<sup><240></sup>Jeremiah 40:7).

**14. Baalis** — named from the idol Baal, as was often the case in heathen names.

**Ammonites** — So it was to them that Ishmael went after murdering Gedaliah (<sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 41:10).

**slay** — literally, “strike thee in the soul,” that is, a deadly stroke.

**Ishmael** — Being of the royal seed of David (<sup><240></sup>Jeremiah 41:1), he envied Gedaliah the presidency to which he thought himself entitled; therefore he leagued himself with the ancient heathen enemy of Judah.

**believed ... not** — generous, but unwise unsuspectingness (<sup><2196></sup>Ecclesiastes 9:16).

**16. thou speakest falsely** — a mystery of providence that God should permit the righteous, in spite of warning, thus to rush into the trap laid for them! <sup><250></sup>Isaiah 57:1 suggests a solution.

# CHAPTER 41

## ◀340▶ JEREMIAH 41:1-18.

**ISHMAEL MURDERS GEDALIAH AND OTHERS, THEN FLEES TO THE AMMONITES. JOHANAN PURSUES HIM, RECOVERS THE CAPTIVES, AND PURPOSES TO FLEE TO EGYPT FOR FEAR OF THE CHALDEANS.**

**1. *seventh month*** — the second month after the burning of the city (◀352▶ Jeremiah 52:12,13).

***and the princes*** — not the nominative. And the princes *came*, for the “princes” are not mentioned either in ▶340◀ Jeremiah 41:2 or in ▶42552◀ 2 Kings 25:25: but, “Ishmael being of the seed royal and of the princes of the king” [MAURER]. But the *ten men* were the “princes of the king”; thus MAURER’S objection has no weight: so *English Version*.

***eat bread together*** — Ishmael murdered Gedaliah, by whom he was hospitably received, in violation of the sacred right of hospitality (◀39409▶ Psalm 41:9).

**2. *slew him whom the king of Babylon had made governor*** — This assigns a reason for their slaying him, as well as showing the magnitude of their crime (◀27021▶ Daniel 2:21 ▶6101▶ Romans 13:1).

**3. *slew all the Jews*** — namely, the attendants and ministers of Gedaliah; or, the military alone, about his person; translate, “*even* (not ‘and,’ as *English Version*) the men of war.” The main portion of the people with Gedaliah, including Jeremiah, Ishmael carried away captive (◀34107▶ Jeremiah 41:10,16).

**4. *no man knew it*** — that is, outside Mizpah. Before tidings of the murder had gone abroad.

**5. *beards shaven***, etc. — indicating their deep sorrow at the destruction of the temple and city.

***cut themselves*** — a heathen custom, forbidden (◀69327▶ Leviticus 19:27,28 ▶6941▶ Deuteronomy 14:1). These men were mostly from Samaria, where the ten tribes, previous to their deportation, had fallen into heathen practices.

**offerings** — unbloody. They do not bring sacrificial victims, but “incense,” etc., to testify their piety.

**house of ... Lord** — that is, the place where the house of the Lord had stood (<sup><259></sup>2 Kings 25:9). The place in which a temple had stood, even when it had been destroyed, was held sacred [PAPINIAN]. Those “from Shiloh” would naturally seek the house of the Lord, since it was at Shiloh it originally was set up (<sup><680></sup>Joshua 18:1).

**6. weeping** — pretending to weep, as they did, for the ruin of the temple.

**Come to Gedaliah** — as if he was one of Gedaliah’s retinue.

**7. and cast them into ... pit** — He had not killed them in the pit (compare <sup><2409></sup>Jeremiah 41:9); these words are therefore rightly supplied in *English Version*. “The pit” or cistern made by Asa to guard against a want of water when Baasha was about to besiege the city (<sup><1152></sup>1 Kings 15:22). The trench or fosse round the city [GROTIUS]. Ishmael’s motive for the murder seems to have been a suspicion that they were coming to live under Gedaliah.

**8. treasures** — It was customary to hide grain in cavities underground in troubled times. “We have treasures,” which we will give, if our lives be spared.

**slew ... not** — (<sup><2138></sup>Proverbs 13:8). Ishmael’s avarice and needs overcame his cruelty.

**9. because of Gedaliah** — rather, “near Gedaliah,” namely, those intercepted by Ishmael on their way from Samaria to Jerusalem and killed at Mizpah, where Gedaliah had lived. Song of Solomon <sup><475></sup>2 Chronicles 17:15, “next”; <sup><681></sup>Nehemiah 3:2, *Margin*, literally, as here, “at his hand.” “In the reign of Gedaliah” [CALVIN]. However, *English Version* gives a good sense: Ishmael’s reason for killing them was *because* of his supposing them to be connected with Gedaliah.

**10. the king’s daughters** — (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 43:6). Zedekiah’s. Ishmael must have got additional followers (whom the hope of gain attracted), besides those who originally set out with him (<sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 41:1), so as to have been able to carry off all the residue of the people. He probably meant to sell them as slaves to the Ammonites (see on <sup><2404></sup>Jeremiah 40:14).

**11. Johanan** — the friend of Gedaliah who had warned him of Ishmael’s treachery, but in vain (<sup><2408></sup>Jeremiah 40:8,13).

**12. the ... waters** — (<sup><4013></sup>2 Samuel 2:13); a large reservoir or lake.



**in Gibeon** — on the road from Mizpah to Ammon: one of the sacerdotal cities of Benjamin, four miles northwest of Jerusalem, now *Eljib*.

**13. glad** — at the prospect of having a deliverer from their captivity.

**14. cast about** — came round.

**16. men of war** — “The men of war,” stated in <sup><24HB></sup>Jeremiah 41:3 to have been slain by Ishmael, must refer to the military about Gedaliah’s person; “the men of war” here to those not so.

**eunuchs** — The kings of Judah had adopted the bad practice of having harems and eunuchs from the surrounding heathen kingdoms.

**17. dwelt** — for a time, until they were ready for their journey to Egypt (<sup><24HE></sup>Jeremiah 42:1-22).

**habitation to Chimham** — his “caravanserai” close by Beth-lehem. David, in reward for Barzillai’s loyalty, took Chimham his son under his patronage, and made over to him his own patrimony in the land of Beth-lehem. It was thence called the habitation of Chimham (Geruth-Chimham), though it reverted to David’s heirs in the year of jubilee. “Caravanserais” (a compound *Persian* word, meaning “the house of a company of travelers”) differ from our inns, in that there is no host to supply food, but each traveler must carry with him his own.

**18. afraid** — lest the Chaldeans should suspect all the Jews of being implicated in Ishmael’s treason, as though the Jews sought to have a prince of the house of David (<sup><24HE></sup>Jeremiah 41:1). Their better way towards gaining God’s favor would have been to have laid the blame on the real culprit, and to have cleared themselves. A tortuous policy is the parent of fear. Righteousness inspires with boldness (<sup><45BE></sup>Psalms 53:5 <sup><21BE></sup>Proverbs 28:1).

# CHAPTER 42

## ◀40▶ JEREMIAH 42:1-22.

**THE JEWS AND JOHANAN INQUIRE OF GOD, THROUGH JEREMIAH, AS TO GOING TO EGYPT, PROMISING OBEDIENCE TO HIS WILL. THEIR SAFETY ON CONDITION OF STAYING IN JUDEA, AND THEIR DESTRUCTION IN THE EVENT OF GOING TO EGYPT, ARE FORETOLD. THEM HYPOCRISY IN ASKING FOR COUNSEL WHICH THEY MEANT NOT TO FOLLOW, IF CONTRARY TO THEIR OWN DETERMINATION, IS REPROVED.**

2. *Jeremiah* — He probably was one of the number carried off from Mizpah, and dwelt with Johanan (◀4116▶ Jeremiah 41:16). Hence the expression is, “came near” (◀4401▶ Jeremiah 42:1), not “sent.”

*Let ... supplication be accepted* — literally, “fall” (see on ▶4601▶ Jeremiah 36:7; ▶4670▶ Jeremiah 37:20).

*pray for us* — (◀0107▶ Genesis 20:7 ▶2304▶ Isaiah 37:4 ▶4156▶ James 5:16).

*thy God* — (◀4405▶ Jeremiah 42:5). The Jews use this form to express their belief in the peculiar relation in which *Jeremiah* stood to God as His accredited prophet. Jeremiah in his reply reminds them that God is *their* God (“*your* God”) as well as his as being the covenant people (◀4404▶ Jeremiah 42:4). They in turn acknowledge this in ▶4406▶ Jeremiah 42:6, “the Lord *our* God.”

*few of many* — as had been foretold (◀0322▶ Leviticus 26:22).

3. They consulted God, like many, not so much to know what was right, as wishing Him to authorize what they had already determined on, whether agreeable to His will or not. So Ahab in consulting Micaiah (◀1223▶ 1 Kings 22:13). Compare Jeremiah’s answer (◀4404▶ Jeremiah 42:4) with Micaiah’s (◀1224▶ 1 Kings 22:14).

4. *I have heard* — that is, I accede to your request.

*your God* — Being His by adoption, ye are not your own, and are bound to whatever He wills (◀0945▶ Exodus 19:5,6; ▶4109▶ 1 Corinthians 6:19,20).

**answer you** — that is, through me.

**keep nothing back** — (<sup><0918></sup>1 Samuel 3:18 <sup><4111></sup>Acts 20:20).

**5. Lord be a true ... witness** — (<sup><0639></sup>Genesis 31:50 <sup><1887></sup>Psalms 89:37 <sup><0016></sup>Revelation 1:5 3:14 19:11).

**6. evil** — not moral evil, which God cannot command (<sup><5013></sup>James 1:13), but what may be *disagreeable* and *hard* to us. Piety obeys God, without questioning, at all costs. See the instance defective in this, that it obeyed only so far as was agreeable to itself (<sup><0953></sup>1 Samuel 15:3,9,13-15,20-23).

**7. ten days** — Jeremiah did not speak of himself, but waited God's time and revelation, showing the reality of his inspiration. Man left to himself would have given an immediate response to the people, who were impatient of delay. The delay was designed to test the sincerity of their professed willingness to obey, and that they should have full time to deliberate (<sup><1882></sup>Deuteronomy 8:2). True obedience bows to God's time, as well as His way and will.

**10. If ye ... abide** — namely, under the Babylonian authority, to which God hath appointed that all should be subject (<sup><2137></sup>Daniel 2:37,38). To resist was to resist God.

**build ... plant** — metaphor for, *I will firmly establish you* (<sup><2806></sup>Jeremiah 24:6).

**I repent ... of the evil** — (<sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 18:8 <sup><1626></sup>Deuteronomy 32:36). *I am satisfied with the punishment I have inflicted on you*, if only you add not a new offense [GROTIUS]. God is said to "repent," when He alters His outward ways of dealing.

**12. show mercies** — rather, *I will excite* (in him) *feelings of mercy* towards you [CALVIN].

**cause you to return** — permit you to return to the peaceable enjoyment of the possessions from which you are wishing to withdraw through fear of the Chaldeans. By departing in disobedience they should incur the very evils they wished thereby to escape; and by staying they should gain the blessings which they feared to lose by doing so.

**13. if ye say**, etc. — avowed rebellion against God, who had often (<sup><1676></sup>Deuteronomy 17:16), as now, forbidden their going to Egypt, lest they should be entangled in its idolatry.

14. *where we shall see no war* — Here they betray their impiety in not believing God's promise (<sup>-3420J</sup>Jeremiah 42:10,11), as if He were a liar (<sup>-3150J</sup>John 5:10).

15. *wholly set your faces* — *firmly resolve* (<sup>-4185J</sup>Luke 9:51) in spite of all warnings (<sup>-3442J</sup>Jeremiah 44:12).

## JEREMIAH 42:16.

**SWORD, WHICH YE FEARED, SHALL OVERTAKE YOU —  
THE VERY EVILS WE THINK TO ESCAPE BY SIN, WE BRING  
ON OURSELVES THEREBY.**

What our hearts are most set on often proves fatal to us. Those who think to escape troubles by changing their place will find them wherever they go (<sup>-3108J</sup>Ezekiel 11:8). The "sword" here is that of Nebuchadnezzar, who fulfilled the prediction in his expedition to Africa (according to MEGASTHENES, a heathen writer), 300 B.C.

17. *all the men* — excepting the "small number" mentioned (<sup>-3444J</sup>Jeremiah 44:14,28); namely, those who were forced into Egypt against their will, Jeremiah, Baruch, etc., and those who took Jeremiah's advice and fled from Egypt before the arrival of the Chaldeans.

18. *As mine anger*, etc. — As ye have already, to your sorrow, found Me true to My word, so shall ye again (<sup>-3172J</sup>Jeremiah 7:20 18:16).

*shall see this place no more* — Ye shall not return to Judea, as those shall who have been removed to Babylon.

19. *I have admonished* — literally, "testified," that is, solemnly admonished, having yourselves as My *witnesses*; so that if ye perish, ye yourselves will have to confess that it was through your own fault, not through ignorance, ye perished.

20. *dissembled in your hearts* — rather, "ye have used deceit against your (own) souls." It is not God, but yourselves, whom ye deceive, to your own ruin, by your own dissimulation (<sup>-3167J</sup>Galatians 6:7) [CALVIN]. But the words following accord best with *English Version*, *ye have dissembled in your hearts* (see on <sup>-3418J</sup>Jeremiah 42:3) towards me, *when ye sent me* to consult God for you.

21. *declared it* — namely, the divine will.

***I ... but ye*** — antithesis. *I* have done my part; *but ye* do not yours. It is no fault of mine that ye act not rightly.

**22. *sojourn*** — *for a time*, until they could return to their country. They expected, therefore, to be restored, in spite of God's prediction to the contrary.

# CHAPTER 43

## ⚔️ JEREMIAH 43:1-13.

### THE JEWS CARRY JEREMIAH AND BARUCH INTO EGYPT. JEREMIAH FORETELLS BY A TYPE THE CONQUEST OF EGYPT BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR, AND THE FATE OF THE FUGITIVES.

2. *Azariah* — the author of the project of going into Egypt; a very different man from the Azariah in Babylon (⚔️ Daniel 1:7 3:12-18).

*proud* — Pride is the parent of disobedience and contempt of God.

3. *Baruch* — He being the younger spake out the revelations which he received from Jeremiah more vehemently. From this cause, and from their knowing that he was in favor with the Chaldeans, arose their suspicion of him. Their perverse fickleness was astonishing. In the forty-second chapter they acknowledged the trustworthiness of Jeremiah, of which they had for so long so many proofs; yet here they accuse him of a lie. The mind of the unregenerate man is full of deceits.

5. *remnant ... returned from all nations* — (⚔️ Jeremiah 40:11,12).

6. *the king's daughters* — Zedekiah's (⚔️ Jeremiah 41:10).

7. *Tahpanhes* — (See on ⚔️ Jeremiah 2:16); Daphne on the Tanitic branch of the Nile, near Pelusium. They naturally came to it first, being on the frontier of Egypt, towards Palestine.

9. *stones* — to be laid as the foundation beneath Nebuchadnezzar's throne (⚔️ Jeremiah 43:10).

*clay* — mortar.

*brick-kiln* — Bricks in that hot country are generally dried in the sun, not burned. The palace of Pharaoh was being built or repaired at this time; hence arose the mortar and brick-kiln at the entry. Of the same materials as that of which Pharaoh's house was built, the substructure of Nebuchadnezzar's throne should be constructed. By a visible symbol implying that the throne of the latter shall be raised on the downfall of the

former. Egypt at that time contended with Babylon for the empire of the East.

**10. *my servant*** — God often makes one wicked man or nation a scourge to another (<sup><3328></sup>Ezekiel 29:18,19,20).

***royal pavilion*** — the rich tapestry (literally, “ornament”) which hung round the throne from above.

**11. *such as are for death to death*** — that is, the deadly plague. Some he shall cause to die by the plague arising from insufficient or bad food; others, by the sword; others he shall lead captive, according as God shall order it (see on <sup><3452></sup>Jeremiah 15:2).

**12. *houses of ... gods*** — He shall not spare even the temple, such will be His fury. A reproof to the Jews that they betook themselves to Egypt, a land whose own safety depended on helpless idols.

***burn ... carry ... captives*** — *burn* the Egyptian idols of wood, *carry* to Babylon those of gold and other metals.

***array himself with the land***, etc. — <sup><3495></sup>Isaiah 49:18 has the same metaphor.

***as a shepherd***, etc. — He shall become master of Egypt as speedily and easily as a shepherd, about to pass on with his flock to another place, puts on his garment.

**13. *images*** — statues or obelisks.

***Beth-shemesh*** — that is, “the house of the sun,” in *Hebrew*; called by the Greeks “Heliopolis”; by the Egyptians, “On” (<sup><1445></sup>Genesis 41:45); east of the Nile, and a few miles north of Memphis. Ephraim Syrus says, the statue rose to the height of sixty cubits; the base was ten cubits. Above there was a miter of a thousand pounds weight. Hieroglyphics are traced around the only obelisk remaining in the present day, sixty or seventy feet high. On the fifth year after the overthrow of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar, leaving the siege of Tyre, undertook his expedition to Egypt [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 10.9,7]. The Egyptians, according to the Arabs, have a tradition that their land was devastated by Nebuchadnezzar in consequence of their king having received the Jews under his protection, and that it lay desolate forty years. But see on <sup><3322></sup>Ezekiel 29:2; <sup><3323></sup>Ezekiel 29:13.

***shall he burn*** — Here the act is attributed to *Nebuchadnezzar*, the instrument, which in <sup><3462></sup>Jeremiah 43:12 is attributed to God. If even the temples be not spared, much less private houses.

# CHAPTER 44

## JEREMIAH 44:1-30.

### JEREMIAH REPROVES THE JEWS FOR THEIR IDOLATRY IN EGYPT, AND DENOUNCES GOD'S JUDGMENTS ON THEM AND EGYPT ALIKE.

1. *Migdol* — meaning a “tower.” A city east of Egypt, towards the Red Sea (<sup><2442></sup>Exodus 14:2 <sup><0637></sup>Numbers 33:7).

*Noph* — Memphis, now Cairo (<sup><2126></sup>Jeremiah 2:16).

*Pathros* — Upper Egypt (<sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 11:11).

2. *evil ... upon Jerusalem* — If I spared not My own sacred city, much less shall ye be safe in Egypt, which I loathe.

3. *they went* — implying perverse assiduity: they *went out of their way* to burn incense (one species of idolatry put for all kinds), etc.

4. (<sup><4835></sup>2 Chronicles 36:15).

7. *now* — after so many warnings.

*commit ... this ... evil against your souls* — (<sup><2079></sup>Jeremiah 7:19 <sup><0468></sup>Numbers 16:38 <sup><2183></sup>Proverbs 8:36). It is not God whom you injure, but yourselves.

8. *in ... Egypt* — where they polluted themselves to ingratiate themselves with the Egyptians.

*ye be gone* — not compelled by fear, but of your own accord, when I forbade you, and when it was free to you to stay in Judea.

*that ye might cut yourselves off* — They, as it were, *purposely* courted their own ruin.

9. Have you forgotten how the *wickednesses* of your fathers were the source of the greatest calamities to you?

*their wives* — The Jews' worldly queens were great promoters of idolatry (<sup><1100></sup>1 Kings 11:1-8 15:13 16:31).

*the land of Judah* — They defiled the land which was holy unto God.



**10. *They ... you*** — The third person puts them to a distance from God on account of their alienating themselves from Him. The second person implies that God formerly had directly addressed them.

***humbled*** — literally, “contrite” (<sup><1517></sup>Psalm 51:17).

***neither ... feared*** — (<sup><184></sup>Proverbs 28:14).

**11. *Behold, I will set my face against you for evil*** — (See on <sup><1370></sup>Leviticus 17:10).

***and to cut off all Judah*** — that is, all the idolaters; <sup><448></sup>Jeremiah 44:28 shows that some returned to Judea (compare <sup><407></sup>Jeremiah 42:17).

**14. *none ... shall escape ... that they should return***, etc. — The Jews had gone to Egypt *with the idea* that a return to Judea, which they thought hopeless to their brethren in Babylon, would be an easy matter to themselves in Egypt: the exact reverse should happen in the case of each respectively. The Jews whom God sent to Babylon were there weaned from idolatry, and were restored; those who went to Egypt by their perverse will were hardened in idolatry, and perished there.

***have a desire*** — literally, “lift up (their) soul,” that is, their hopes (compare <sup><227></sup>Jeremiah 22:27, *Margin*; <sup><1245></sup>Deuteronomy 24:15, *Margin*).

***none shall return but such as shall escape*** — namely, the “small number” (<sup><448></sup>Jeremiah 44:28) who were brought by force into Egypt, as Jeremiah and Baruch, and those who, in accordance with Jeremiah’s advice, should flee from Egypt before the arrival of the Chaldeans (see on <sup><407></sup>Jeremiah 42:17). CALVIN less probably refers the words to the return of the exiles in Babylon, which the Jews in Egypt regarded as hopeless.

**15. *their wives*** — The idolatry began with them (<sup><1104></sup>1 Kings 11:4 <sup><1244></sup>1 Timothy 2:14). Their husbands’ connivance implicated them in the guilt.

**16. *we will not*** — (<sup><216></sup>Jeremiah 6:16).

**17. *whatsoever ... goeth ... out of our ... mouth*** — whatever *vow* we have uttered to our gods (<sup><445></sup>Jeremiah 44:25 <sup><1223></sup>Deuteronomy 23:23 <sup><1136></sup>Judges 11:36). The source of all superstitions is that men oppose their own will and fancies to God’s commands.

***queen of heaven*** — (See on <sup><178></sup>Jeremiah 7:18); Ashtaroth or Astarte.

***we ... fathers ... king***, etc. — The evil was restricted to no one class: all from the highest to the lowest shared the guilt.

**then had we plenty** — Fools attribute their seeming prosperity to God's connivance at their sin: but see <sup><3103></sup>Proverbs 1:32 <sup><2081></sup>Ecclesiastes 8:11-13. In fact, God had often chastised them for their idolatry (see <sup><0024></sup>Judges 2:14); but it is the curse of impiety not to perceive the hand of God in calamities.

**victuals** — Men cast away the bread of the soul for the bread that perisheth (<sup><0808></sup>Deuteronomy 8:3 <sup><0327></sup>John 6:27). So Esau (<sup><3216></sup>Hebrews 12:16).

**18.** They impute their calamities to their service of God, but these are often marks of His favor, not of wrath, to do His people good at their latter end (<sup><0816></sup>Deuteronomy 8:16).

**19. make ... cakes to worship her** — MAURER translates, "to form her image." *Crescent-shaped cakes* were offered to the moon. *Vulgate* supports *English Version*.

**without our men** — The women mentioned (<sup><3445></sup>Jeremiah 44:15); "a great multitude" here speak: we have not engaged in secret night orgies which might justly be regarded unfavorably by *our husbands*: our sacred rites have been open, and with their privity. They wish to show how unreasonable it is that Jeremiah should oppose himself alone to the act of all, not merely women, but *men* also. The guilty, like these women, desire to shield themselves under the complicity of others. Instead of helping one another towards heaven, husband and wife often ripen one another for hell.

**21. The incense ... did not the Lord remember** — Jeremiah owns that they did as they said, but in retort asks, did not God repay their own evil-doing? Their very land in its present desolation attests this (<sup><3442></sup>Jeremiah 44:22), as was foretold (<sup><2511></sup>Jeremiah 25:11,18,38).

**23. law** — the moral precepts.

**statutes** — the ceremonial.

**testimonies** — the judicial (<sup><2911></sup>Daniel 9:11,12).

**25. Ye ... have both spoken with ... mouths, and fulfilled with ... hand** — ironical praise. They had pleaded their obligation to fulfill their vows, in excuse for their idolatry. He answers, no one can accuse you of unsteadiness as to your idolatrous vows; but steadfastness towards God ought to have prevented you from making, or, when made, from keeping such vows.

**ye will surely accomplish ... vows** — Jeremiah hereby gives them up to their own fatal obstinacy.

**26. *I have sworn*** — *I*, too have made a *vow* which I will fulfill. Since ye will not hear Me speaking and warning, hear Me *swearing*.

**by my great name** — that is, by Myself (<sup>01216</sup>Genesis 22:16), the greatest by whom God can swear (<sup>3063</sup>Hebrews 6:13,14).

**my name shall no more be named** — The Jews, heretofore, amidst all their idolatry, had retained the form of appeal to the name of God and the law, the distinctive glory of their nation; God will allow this no more (<sup>3319</sup>Ezekiel 20:39): there shall be none left there to profane His name thus any more.

**27. *watch over ... for evil*** — (<sup>3110</sup>Jeremiah 1:10 <sup>3106</sup>Ezekiel 7:6). The God, whose providence is ever solicitously watching over His people for good, shall solicitously, as it were, watch for their hurt. Contrast <sup>3613</sup>Jeremiah 31:28 32:41.

**28. *small number*** — (see on <sup>3444</sup>Jeremiah 44:14; and <sup>3427</sup>Jeremiah 42:17 <sup>3273</sup>Isaiah 27:13); compare “all-consumed” (<sup>3427</sup>Jeremiah 44:27). A *band easily counted*, whereas they were expecting to return triumphantly in large numbers.

**shall know** — most of them experimentally, and to their cost.

**whose words ... mine, or theirs** — *Hebrew*, “that from Me and them.” Jehovah’s words are His threats of destruction to the Jews; theirs, the assertion that they expected all goods from their gods (<sup>3447</sup>Jeremiah 44:17), etc. “Mine”; by which I predict ruin to them. “Theirs”; by which they give themselves free scope in iniquity.

**shall stand** — (<sup>3311</sup>Psalms 33:11).

**29. *this ... sign unto you*** — The calamity of Pharaoh-hophra (see on <sup>3440</sup>Jeremiah 44:30) shall be a sign to you that as he shall fall before his enemy, so you shall subsequently fall before Nebuchadnezzar (<sup>4148</sup>Matthew 24:8) [GROTIUS]. CALVIN makes the “sign” to be simultaneous with the event signified, not antecedent to it, as in <sup>0182</sup>Exodus 3:12. The Jews believed Egypt impregnable, so shut in was it by natural barriers. The Jews being “punished *in this place*” will be a sign that their view is false, and God’s threat true. He calls it “a sign *unto you*,” because God’s prediction is equivalent to the event, so that they may even now take it as a sign. When fulfilled it would cease to be a sign *to them*: for they would be dead.

**30. *Hophra*** — in HERODOTUS called Apries. He succeeded Psammis, the successor of Pharaoh-necho, who was beaten by Nebuchadnezzar at

Carchemish, on the Euphrates. Amasis rebelled against, and overcame him, in the city Sais.

*them that seek his life* — HERODOTUS, in curious accordance with this, records that Amasis, after treating Hophra well at first, was instigated, by persons who thought they could not be safe unless he were put to death, to strangle him. “His enemies” refer to Amasis, etc.; the words are accurately chosen, so as not to refer to Nebuchadnezzar, who is not mentioned till the end of the verse, and in connection with Zedekiah (<sup>30:18</sup>Ezekiel 20:3 30:21). Amasis’ civil war with Hophra pioneered the way for Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion in the twenty-third year of his reign [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 10.11].

# CHAPTER 45

## 2481B JEREMIAH 45:1-5.

### JEREMIAH COMFORTS BARUCH.

After the completion of the prophecies and histories appertaining to the Jewish people and kings, Jeremiah subjoins one referring to an individual, Baruch; even as there are subjoined to the epistles of Paul addressed to churches, epistles to individuals, some of which were prior in date to the former. Afterwards follow the prophecies referring to other nations, closing the book [GROTIUS]. The date of the events here told is eighteen years before the taking of the city; this chapter in point of time follows the thirty-sixth chapter. Baruch seems to have been regularly employed by Jeremiah to commit his prophecies to writing (2481C Jeremiah 36:1,4,32).

1. *these words* — his prophecies from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the fourth of Jehoiakim.

3. *Thou didst say*, etc. — Jeremiah does not spare his disciple, but unveils his fault, namely, fear for his life by reason of the suspicions which he incurred in the eyes of his countrymen (compare 2481D Jeremiah 36:17), as if he was in sympathy with the Chaldeans (2481E Jeremiah 43:3), and instigator of Jeremiah; also ingratitude in speaking of his “grief,” etc., whereas he ought to deem himself highly blessed in being employed by God to record Jeremiah’s prophecies.

*added* — rescued from the peril of my first writing (2481F Jeremiah 36:26). I am again involved in a similar peril. He upbraids God as dealing harshly with him.

*I fainted* — rather, “I am weary.”

*no rest* — no quiet resting-place.

4. *that which I have built ... planted I will pluck up* — (2481G Isaiah 5:5). This whole nation (the Jews) which I founded and planted with such extraordinary care and favor, I will overthrow.

5. *seekest thou great things for thyself* — Thou art over-fastidious and self-seeking. When My own peculiar people, a “whole” nation (2481H Jeremiah 45:4), and the temple, are being given to ruin, dost *thou* expect

to be exempt from all hardship? Baruch had raised his expectations too high in this world, and this made his distresses harder to be borne. The frowns of the world would not disquiet us if we did not so eagerly covet its smiles. What folly to seek great things for ourselves here, where everything is little, and nothing certain!

***all flesh*** — the whole Jewish nation and even foreign peoples (<sup>253</sup>Jeremiah 25:26).

***but thy life ... for a prey*** — Esteem it enough at such a general crisis that thy life shall be granted thee. Be content with this boon of life which I will rescue from imminent death, even as when all things are given up to plunder, if one escape with aught, he has a something saved as his “prey” (<sup>219</sup>Jeremiah 21:9). It is striking how Jeremiah, who once used such complaining language himself, is enabled now to minister the counsel requisite for Baruch when falling into the same sin (<sup>211</sup>Jeremiah 12:1-5 15:10-18). This is part of God’s design in suffering His servants to be tempted, that their temptations may adapt them for ministering to their fellow servants when tempted.

# CHAPTER 46

## JEREMIAH 46:1-28.

### THE PROPHECIES, FORTY-SIXTH THROUGH FIFTY-SECOND CHAPTERS, REFER TO FOREIGN PEOPLES.

He begins with Egypt, being the country to which he had been removed. The forty-sixth chapter contains two prophecies concerning it: the discomfiture of Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar, and the long subsequent conquest of Egypt by the same king; also the preservation of the Jews (<sup><2467></sup>Jeremiah 46:27,28).

1. General heading of the next six chapters of prophecies concerning the Gentiles; the prophecies are arranged according to nations, not by the dates.

2. Inscription of the first prophecy.

**Pharaoh-necho** — He, when going against Carchemish (Cercusium, near the Euphrates), encountered Josiah, king of Judah (the ally of Assyria), at Megiddo, and slew him there (<sup><1209></sup>2 Kings 23:29 <sup><4631></sup>2 Chronicles 35:20-24); but he was four years subsequently overcome at Carchemish, by Nebuchadnezzar, as is foretold here; and lost all the territory which had been subject to the Pharaohs west of the Euphrates, and between it and the Nile. The prediction would mitigate the Jews' grief for Josiah, and show his death was not to be unavenged (<sup><1247></sup>2 Kings 24:7). He is famed as having fitted out a fleet of discovery from the Red Sea, which doubled the Cape of Good Hope and returned to Egypt by the Mediterranean.

3. Derisive summons to battle. With all your mighty preparation for the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, when ye come to the encounter, ye shall be "dismayed" (<sup><2465></sup>Jeremiah 46:5). Your mighty threats shall end in nothing.

**buckler** — smaller, and carried by the light-armed cavalry.

**shield** — of larger size, and carried by the heavily armed infantry.

4. **Harness the horses** — namely, to the war chariots, for which Egypt was famed (<sup><1247></sup>Exodus 14:7 15:4).

**get up, ye horsemen** — *get up* into the chariots. MAURER, because of the parallel “horses,” translates, “Mount the *steeds*.” But it is rather describing the successive steps in equipping the war chariots; first *harness* the horses to them, then let the horsemen *mount* them.

**brigandines** — cuirasses, or coats of mail.

5. (See on <sup>241B</sup>Jeremiah 46:3). The language of astonishment, that an army so well equipped should be driven back in “dismay.” The prophet sees this in prophetic vision.

**fled apace** — literally, “fled a flight,” that is, flee precipitately.

**look not back** — They do not even dare to look back at their pursuers.

6. **Let not** — equivalent to the strongest *negation*. *Let not* any of the Egyptian warriors think to *escape by swiftness or by might*.

**toward the north** — that is, in respect to Egypt or Judea. In the northward region, by the Euphrates (see <sup>241D</sup>Jeremiah 46:2).

7. **as a flood** — (<sup>241D</sup>Jeremiah 47:2 <sup>238E</sup>Isaiah 8:7,8 <sup>271D</sup>Daniel 11:22). The figure is appropriate in addressing Egyptians, as the Nile, their great river, yearly overspreads their lands with a turbid, muddy flood. So their army, swelling with arrogance, shall overspread the region south of Euphrates; but it, like the Nile, shall retreat as fast as it advanced.

8. Answer to the question in <sup>241F</sup>Jeremiah 46:7.

**waters ... moved like the rivers** — The rise of the Nile is gentle; but at the mouth it, unlike most rivers, is much agitated, owing to the sandbanks impeding its course, and so it rushes into the sea like a cataract.

9. Ironical exhortation, as in <sup>241B</sup>Jeremiah 46:3. The Egyptians, owing to the heat of their climate and abstinence from animal food, were physically weak, and therefore employed mercenary soldiers.

**Ethiopians** — *Hebrew, Cush*: Abyssinia and Nubia.

**Libyans** — *Phut*, Mauritania, west of Egypt (compare <sup>410F</sup>Genesis 10:6).

**shield** — The Libyans borrowed from Egypt the use of the long shield extending to the feet [XENOPHON, *Cyropaedia*, 6 and 7].

**Lydians** — not the Lydians west of Asia Minor (<sup>410D</sup>Genesis 10:22 <sup>350E</sup>Ezekiel 30:5), but the *Ludim*, an African nation descended from Egypt (Mizraim) (<sup>410E</sup>Genesis 10:13 <sup>350E</sup>Ezekiel 30:5 Na 3:9).



**handle and bend the bow** — The employment of *two* verbs expresses the manner of bending the bow, namely, the foot being pressed on the center, and the hands holding the ends of it.

**10. vengeance** — for the slaughter of Josiah (<sup><12239></sup>2 Kings 23:29).

**sword shall devour ... be ... drunk** — poetical personification (<sup><1632></sup>Deuteronomy 32:42).

**a sacrifice** — (<sup><23407></sup>Isaiah 34:6 <sup><25917></sup>Ezekiel 39:17). The slaughter of the Egyptians is represented as a sacrifice to satiate His righteous vengeance.

**11. Gilead ... balm** — (See on <sup><3432></sup>Jeremiah 8:22); namely, for curing the wounds; but no medicine will avail, so desperate shall be the slaughter.

**virgin** — Egypt is so called on account of her effeminate luxury, and as having never yet been brought under foreign yoke.

**thou shalt not be cured** — literally, “there shall be no cure for thee” (<sup><3413></sup>Jeremiah 30:13 <sup><3521></sup>Ezekiel 30:21). Not that the kingdom of Egypt should cease to exist, but it should not recover its former strength; the blow should be irretrievable.

**12. mighty ... stumbled against ... mighty ... fallen both together** — Their very multitude shall prove an impediment in their confused flight, one treading on the other.

**13-26.** Prophecy of the invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, which took place sixteen years after the taking of Jerusalem. Having spent thirteen years in the siege of Tyre, and having obtained nothing for his pains, he is promised by God Egypt for his reward in humbling Tyre (<sup><35917></sup>Ezekiel 29:17-20 30:1-31:18). The intestine commotions between Amasis and Pharaoh-hophra prepared his way (compare *Note*, see on <sup><3901></sup>Isaiah 19:1, etc.).

**14. Declare ... publish** — as if giving sentence from a tribunal.

**Migdol ... Noph ... Tahpanhes** — east, south, and north. He mentions the three other quarters, but omits the west, because the Chaldeans did not advance thither. These cities, too, were the best known to the Jews, as being in their direction.

**sword shall devour round about thee** — namely, the Syrians, Jews, Moabites, and Ammonites (see on <sup><3480></sup>Jeremiah 48:1). The exhortation is ironical, as in <sup><3401></sup>Jeremiah 46:4,10 15.

**thy valiant men** — manuscripts, the *Septuagint*, and *Vulgate* read, “thy valiant one,” Apis, the bull-shaped Egyptian idol worshipped at Noph or Memphis. The contrast thus is between the palpable impotence of the idol and the *might* attributed to it by the worshippers. The *Hebrew* term, “strong,” or “valiant,” is applied to bulls (<sup><3222></sup>Psalm 22:12). Cambyses in his invasion of Egypt destroyed the sacred bull.

**drive them** — (Compare <sup><3415></sup>Jeremiah 46:5). The *Hebrew* word is used of a sweeping rain (<sup><1018></sup>Proverbs 28:3).

**16. He** — Jehovah.

**made many to fall** — literally, “multiplied the faller,” that is, fallers.

**one fell upon another** — (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 46:6,12):even before the enemy strikes them (<sup><1037></sup>Leviticus 26:37).

**let us go again to our own people** — the language of the confederates and mercenaries, exhorting one another to desert the Egyptian standard, and return to their respective homes (<sup><2419></sup>Jeremiah 46:9,21).

**from the oppressing sword** — from the cruel sword, namely, of the Chaldeans (compare <sup><2538></sup>Jeremiah 25:38).

**17. there** — in their own country severally, the foreign soldiers (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 46:16) cry, “Pharaoh is,” etc.

**but a noise** — He threatens great things, but when the need arises, he does nothing. His threats are mere “noise” (compare <sup><1031></sup>1 Corinthians 13:1). MAURER translates, “is ruined,” literally (in appropriate abruptness of language), “Pharaoh, king ... ruin.” The context favors *English Version*. His vauntings of what he would do when the time of battle should come have proved to be *empty sounds; he hath passed the time appointed* (namely, for battle with the Chaldeans).

**18.** As the mountains Tabor and Carmel tower high above the other hills of Palestine, so Nebuchadnezzar (<sup><2426></sup>Jeremiah 46:26) when he comes shall prove himself superior to all his foes. Carmel forms a bold promontory jutting out into the Mediterranean. Tabor is the higher of the two; therefore it is said to be “among the *mountains*”; and Carmel “by the *sea*.”

**the King ... Lord of hosts** — (<sup><2415></sup>Jeremiah 48:15); in contrast to “Pharaoh king of Egypt ... but a noise” (<sup><2417></sup>Jeremiah 46:17). God the true “*King ... the Lord of hosts*,” shall cause Nebuchadnezzar to come. Whereas Pharaoh shall not come to battle *at the time appointed*, notwithstanding his boasts, Nebuchadnezzar *shall come* according to the prediction of the *King*, who

has all *hosts* in His power, however ye Egyptians may despise the prediction.

**19. furnish thyself** — literally, “make for thyself vessels” (namely, to contain food and other necessities for the journey) for captivity.

**daughter** — so in <sup><2461></sup>Jeremiah 46:11.

**dwelling in Egypt** — that is, the *inhabitants* of Egypt, the Egyptians, represented as *the daughter of Egypt* (<sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 48:18 <sup><2462></sup>2 Kings 19:21). “Dwelling” implies that they thought themselves to be securely fixed in their habitations beyond the reach of invasion.

**20. heifer** — wanton, like a fat, untamed heifer (<sup><3011></sup>Hosea 10:11). Appropriate to Egypt, where Apis was worshipped under the form of a fair bull marked with spots.

**destruction** — that is, a destroyer: Nebuchadnezzar. *Vulgate* translates, “a goader,” answering to the metaphor, “one who will *goad* the *heifer*” and tame her. The *Arabic* idiom favors this [ROSENMULLER].

**cometh ... cometh** — The repetition implies, it cometh surely and quickly (<sup><1913></sup>Psalms 96:13).

**out of the north** — (See on <sup><2014></sup>Jeremiah 1:14; <sup><2470></sup>Jeremiah 47:2).

**21.** Translate, “Also her hired men (mercenary soldiers, <sup><2419></sup>Jeremiah 46:9,16), who are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks, even they also are turned back,” that is, shall turn their backs to flee. The same image, “heifer ... bullocks” (<sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 46:20,21), is applied to Egypt’s foreign mercenaries, as to *herself*. Pampered with the luxuries of Egypt, they become as enervated for battle as the natives themselves.

**22.** The cry of Egypt when invaded shall be like the hissing of a serpent roused by the woodcutters from its lair. No longer shall she loudly roar like a heifer, but with a low murmur of fear, as a serpent hissing.

**with axes** — the Scythian mode of armor. The Chaldeans shall come with such confidence as if not about to have to fight with soldiers, but merely to cut down trees offering no resistance.

**23. her forest** — (<sup><2108></sup>Isaiah 10:34).

**though it cannot be searched** — They cut down her forest, dense and unsearchable (<sup><3019></sup>Job 5:9 9:10 36:26) as it may seem: referring to the thickly set cities of Egypt, which were at that time a thousand and twenty. The *Hebrew* particle is properly, “for,” “because.”

**because** — the reason why the Chaldeans shall be able to cut down so dense a forest of cities as Egypt: they themselves are countless in numbers.

**grasshoppers** — locusts (<sup>406B</sup>Judges 6:5).

**25. multitude** — *Hebrew*, “Amon” (Na 3:8, *Margin*, “No-Ammon”), the same as Thebes or Diospolis in Upper Egypt, where Jupiter Ammon had his famous temple. In *English Version*, “multitude” answers to “*populous No*” (Na 3:8 <sup>406E</sup>Ezekiel 30:15). The reference to “*their gods*” which follows, makes the translation more likely, “*Ammon of No*,” that is, No and her idol Ammon; so the *Chaldee Version*. So called either from Ham, the son of Noah; or, the “nourisher,” as the word means.

**their kings** — the kings of the nations in league with Egypt.

**26. afterward ... inhabited** — Under Cyrus forty years after the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, it threw off the Babylonian yoke but has never regained its former prowess (<sup>446E</sup>Jeremiah 46:11 <sup>439E</sup>Ezekiel 29:11-15).

**27, 28.** Repeated from <sup>480D</sup>Jeremiah 30:10,11. When the Church (and literal Israel) might seem utterly consumed, there still remains hidden hope, because God, as it were, raises His people from the dead (<sup>461E</sup>Romans 11:15). Whereas the godless “nations” are consumed even though they survive, as are the Egyptians after their overthrow; because they are radically accursed and doomed [CALVIN].

# CHAPTER 47

## JEREMIAH 47:1-7.

### PROPHECY AGAINST THE PHILISTINES.

1. *Pharaoh-necho* probably smote Gaza on his return after defeating Josiah at Megiddo (<sup>465D</sup>2 Chronicles 35:20) [GROTIUS]. Or, *Pharaoh-hophra* (<sup>457B</sup>Jeremiah 37:5,7) is intended: probably on his return from his fruitless attempt to save Jerusalem from the Chaldeans, he smote Gaza in order that his expedition might not be thought altogether in vain [CALVIN] (Amos 1:6,7).

2. *waters* — (<sup>230D</sup>Isaiah 8:7). The Chaldeans from the north are compared to the overwhelming waters of their own Euphrates. The smiting of Gaza was to be only the prelude of a greater disaster to the Philistines. Nebuzara-dan was left by Nebuchadnezzar, after he had taken Jerusalem, to subdue the rest of the adjoining cities and country.

3. (Compare <sup>209B</sup>Jeremiah 4:29).

*fathers ... not look back to ... children* — Each shall think only of his own safety, not even the fathers regarding their own children. So desperate shall be the calamity that men shall divest themselves of the natural affections.

*for feebleness of hands* — The hands, the principal instruments of action, shall have lost all power; their whole hope shall be in their feet.

4. *every helper* — The Philistines, being neighbors to the Phoenicians of Tyre and Sidon, would naturally make common cause with them in the case of invasion. These cities would have no *helper* left when the Philistines should be destroyed.

*Caphtor* — the Caphtorim and Philistines both came from Mizraim (<sup>0103</sup>Genesis 10:13,14). The Philistines are said to have been delivered by God from Caphtor (<sup>309D</sup>Amos 9:7). Perhaps before the time of Moses they dwelt near and were subjugated by the Caphtorim (<sup>623</sup>Deuteronomy 2:23) and subsequently delivered. “The remnant” means here those still left after the Egyptians had attacked Gaza and Palestine; or rather, those left of the Caphtorim after the Chaldeans had attacked them previous to their attack on the Philistines. Some identify Caphtor with Cappadocia; GESENIUS, with

Crete (<sup><3256></sup>Ezekiel 25:16, Cherethims); KITTO, Cyprus. Between Palestine and Idumea there was a city Caparorsa; and their close connection with Palestine on the one hand, and Egypt (Mizraim, <sup><1103></sup>Genesis 10:13,14) on the other hand, makes this locality the most likely.

**5. Baldness ... cut thyself** — Palestine is represented as a female who has torn off her hair and cut her flesh, the heathenish (<sup><6933></sup>Leviticus 19:28) token of mourning (<sup><2487></sup>Jeremiah 48:37).

**their valley** — the long strip of low plain occupied by the Philistines along the Mediterranean, west of the mountains of Judea. The *Septuagint* reads *Anakim*, the remains of whom were settled in those regions (<sup><0433></sup>Numbers 13:28). Joshua dislodged them so that none were left but in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (<sup><6122></sup>Joshua 11:21,22). But the parallel (<sup><2477></sup>Jeremiah 47:7), “Ashkelon ... the *sea-shore*,” established *English Version* here, “Ashkelon ... their *valley*.”

**6. Jeremiah, in the person of the Philistines afflicting themselves** (<sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 47:5), apostrophizes the “sword of the Lord,” entreating mercy (compare <sup><6244></sup>Deuteronomy 32:41 <sup><3203></sup>Ezekiel 21:3-5,9,10).

**up thyself** — *Hebrew*, “Gather thyself,” that is, retire or return.

**7. Jeremiah, from addressing the sword in the second person, turns to his hearers and speaks of it in the third person.**

**Lord ... given it a charge** — (<sup><2347></sup>Ezekiel 14:17).

**the sea-shore** — the strip of land between the mountains and Mediterranean, held by the Philistines: “their valley” (see on <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 47:5).

**there hath he appointed it** — (<sup><3109></sup>Micah 6:9). There hath He ordered it to rage.

# CHAPTER 48

## JEREMIAH 48:1-47.

### PROPHECY AGAINST MOAB.

It had taken part with the Chaldeans against Judea (<sup><12412></sup>2 Kings 24:2). Fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, when also he attacked Egypt (<sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 43:8-13) and Ammon (<sup><2489></sup>Jeremiah 49:1-6). [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 10:9,7]. Jeremiah in this prophecy uses that of <sup><24811></sup>Isaiah 15:1-16:14, amplifying and adapting it to his purpose under inspiration, at the same time confirming its divine authority. Isaiah, however, in his prophecy refers to the devastation of Moab by the Assyrian king, *Shalmaneser*; Jeremiah refers to that by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

1. **Nebo** — a mountain and town of Moab; its meaning is “that which fructifies.”

**Kiriathaim** — a city of Moab, *consisting of two cities*, as the word signifies; originally held by the Emim (<sup><1445></sup>Genesis 14:5).

**Misgab** — meaning “elevation.” It lay on an elevation.

2. **no more praise** — (<sup><2364></sup>Isaiah 16:14).

**in Heshbon** — The foe having taken Heshbon, the chief city of Moab (<sup><2485></sup>Jeremiah 48:45), in it *devise evil against Moab* (“it”) saying, Come,” etc. Heshbon was midway between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok; it was the residence of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and afterwards a Levitical city in Gad (<sup><1423></sup>Numbers 21:26). There is a play on words in the *Hebrew*, “*Heshbon, Hashbu.*” *Heshbon* means a place of *devising* or *counsel*. The city, heretofore called the *seat of counsel*, shall find other *counsellors*, namely, those who devise its destruction.

**thou shall be cut down ... Madmen** — rather, by a play on words on the meaning of *madmen* (“silence”), *Thou shalt be brought to silence*, so as well to deserve thy name (<sup><24511></sup>Isaiah 15:1). Thou shalt not dare to utter a sound.

3. **Horonaim** — the same as the city Avara, mentioned by PTOLEMY. The word means “double caves” (<sup><1410></sup>Nehemiah 2:10 <sup><24515></sup>Isaiah 15:5).

4. *little ones ... cry* — heightening the distress of the scene. The foe does not spare even infants.

5. *going up of Luhith ... going down of Horonaim* — Horonaim lay in a plain, Luhith on a height. To the latter, therefore, the Moabites would flee with “continual weeping,” as a place of safety from the Chaldeans. Literally, “Weeping shall go up upon weeping.”

6. They exhort one another to flee.

*heath* — or the juniper (see on <sup>2470B</sup>Jeremiah 17:6). MAURER translates, “Be like one *naked* in the wilderness.” But the sense is, Live *in the wilderness like the heath*, or juniper; do not “*trust in*” walls (<sup>2487B</sup>Jeremiah 48:7) [GROTIUS]. (Compare <sup>4246B</sup>Matthew 24:16-18).

7. *thy works* — namely, fortifications built by thy work. Moab was famous for its fortresses (<sup>2488B</sup>Jeremiah 48:18). The antithesis is to <sup>2486B</sup>Jeremiah 48:6, “Be ... in the wilderness,” where there are no fortified cities.

*thou ... also* — like the rest of the surrounding peoples, Judah, etc.

*Chemosh* — the tutelary god of Moab (<sup>0023B</sup>Numbers 21:29 <sup>0712B</sup>Judges 11:24 <sup>1110B</sup>1 Kings 11:7 <sup>1223B</sup>2 Kings 23:13). When a people were vanquished, their gods also were taken away by the victors (<sup>2482B</sup>Jeremiah 43:12).

8. *the valley ... shall perish* — that is, those dwelling in the valley.

9. *Give wings*, etc. — (<sup>4556B</sup>Psalms 55:6). Unless it get wings, it cannot escape the foe. “Wings,” the *Hebrew* root meaning is a “flower” (<sup>1842B</sup>Job 14:2); so the flower-like *plumage* of a bird.

10. *work of ... Lord* — the divinely appointed utter devastation of Moab. To represent how entirely this is God’s will, a curse is pronounced on the Chaldeans, the instrument, if they do it *negligently* (*Margin*) or by halves (<sup>0023B</sup>Judges 5:23); compare Saul’s sin as to Amalek (<sup>0933B</sup>1 Samuel 15:3,9), and Ahab’s as to Syria (<sup>1122B</sup>1 Kings 20:42).

11. *settled on ... lees* — (See on <sup>22516B</sup>Isaiah 25:6; <sup>3012B</sup>Zephaniah 1:12). As wine left to settle on its own lees retains its flavor and strength (which it would lose by being poured from one vessel into another), so Moab, owing to its never having been dislodged from its settlements, retains its pride of strength unimpaired.

*emptied from vessel*, etc. — To make it fit for use, it used to be filtered from vessel to vessel.

*scent* — retaining the image: the bouquet or perfume of the wine.



**12. wanderers** — rather, “pourers out,” retaining the image of <sup><3481></sup>Jeremiah 48:11, that is, the Chaldeans who shall remove Moab from his settlements, as men pour wine from off the lees into other vessels. “His vessels” are the cities of Moab; the broken “bottles” the men slain [GROTIUS]. The *Hebrew* and the kindred *Arabic* word means, “to turn on one side,” so as to empty a vessel [MAURER].

**13. ashamed** — have the shame of disappointment as to the hopes they entertained of aid from Chemosh, their idol.

**Beth-el** — (<sup><1127></sup>1 Kings 12:27,29) — that is, *the golden calf* set up there by Jeroboam.

**15. gone up ... gone down** — in antithesis.

**out of her cities** — Rather, “Moab ... and her cities are gone up,” namely, pass away in the ascending smoke of their conflagration (<sup><1683></sup>Joshua 8:20,21 <sup><1734></sup>Judges 20:40). When this took place, the young warriors would *go down* from the burning citadels only to meet their own *slaughter* [GROTIUS]. *English Version* is somewhat favored by the fact that “gone out” is *singular*, and “cities” *plural*. The antithesis favors GROTIUS.

**16. near** — to the prophet’s eye, though probably twenty-three years elapsed between the utterance of the prophecy in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (<sup><1210></sup>2 Kings 24:2) and its fulfillment in the fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

**17. bemoan** — Not that Moab deserves pity, but this mode of expression pictures more vividly the grievousness of Moab’s calamities.

**all ye that know his name** — those at a greater distance whom the fame of Moab’s “name” had reached, as distinguished from those “about him,” that is, near.

**strong staff ... rod** — Moab is so called as striking terror into and oppressing other peoples (<sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 9:4 14:4,5); also because of its dignity and power (<sup><3410></sup>Psalms 110:2 <sup><3410></sup>Zechariah 11:7).

**18.** (<sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 47:1).

**dost inhabit** — now so securely settled as if in a lasting habitation.

**thirst** — Dibon, being situated on the Arnon, abounded in water (<sup><2339></sup>Isaiah 15:9). In sad contrast with this, and with her “glory” in general, she shall be reduced not only to shame, but to the want of the commonest necessities (“thirst”) in the arid wilderness (<sup><3481></sup>Jeremiah 48:6).

**19. Aroer** — on the north bank of the Arnon, a city of Ammon

(<sup><0819></sup>Deuteronomy 2:36 <sup><312></sup>12). As it was on “*the way*” of the Moabites who fled into the desert, its inhabitants “ask” what is the occasion of Moab’s flight, and so learn the lot that awaits themselves (compare <sup><0043></sup>1 Samuel 4:13,16).

**20.** Answer of the fleeing Moabites to the Ammonite inquirers

(<sup><3889></sup>Jeremiah 48:19 <sup><2342></sup>Isaiah 16:2). He enumerates the Moabite cities at length, as it seemed so incredible that all should be so utterly ruined. Many of them were assigned to the Levites, while Israel stood.

**in Arnon** — the north boundary between Moab and Ammon (<sup><3889></sup>Jeremiah 48:19 <sup><0213></sup>Numbers 21:13).

**21. plain** — (<sup><3883></sup>Jeremiah 48:8). Not only the mountainous regions, but also the plain, shall be wasted.

**Holon** — (Compare <sup><0553></sup>Joshua 15:51).

**Jahazah** — (<sup><0223></sup>Numbers 21:23 <sup><2504></sup>Isaiah 15:4).

**Mephaath** — (<sup><0338></sup>Joshua 13:18 <sup><2137></sup>21:37).

**22. Beth-diblathaim** — “the house of Diblathaim”: Almon-diblathaim (<sup><0836></sup>Numbers 33:46); “Diblath” (<sup><2063></sup>Ezekiel 6:13); not far from Mount Nebo (<sup><0836></sup>Numbers 33:46,47).

**23. Beth-gamul** — meaning “the city of camels.”

**Beth-meon** — “the house of habitation”: Beth-baalmeon (<sup><0337></sup>Joshua 13:17). Now its ruins are called Miun.

**24. Kerioth** — (<sup><0525></sup>Joshua 15:25 <sup><3012></sup>Amos 2:2).

**Bozrah** — (See on <sup><2346></sup>Isaiah 34:6); at one time under the dominion of Edom, though belonging originally to Moab (<sup><0373></sup>Genesis 36:33 <sup><2601></sup>Isaiah 63:1). Others think the Bozrah in Edom distinct from that of Moab. “Bezer” (<sup><0233></sup>Joshua 21:36).

**25. horn** — the emblem of strength and sovereignty: it is the horned animal’s means of offense and defense (<sup><0719></sup>Psalms 75:5,10 <sup><2018></sup>Lamentations 2:3).

**26. drunken** — (see on <sup><3432></sup>Jeremiah 13:12; <sup><3257></sup>Jeremiah 25:17). Intoxicated with the cup of divine wrath, so as to be in helpless distraction.

**magnified ... against ... Lord** — boasted arrogantly against *God's people*, that whereas Israel was fallen, Moab remained flourishing.

**wallow in ... vomit** — following up the image of a drunken man, that is, shall be so afflicted by God's wrath as to *disgorge* all his past pride, riches, and vainglory, and *fall* in his shameful abasement.

**he also ... derision** — He in his disaster shall be an object of derision to us, as we in ours have been to him (<sup>24827</sup>Jeremiah 48:27). Retribution in kind.

27. (<sup>3108</sup>Zephaniah 2:8).

**a derision** — The *Hebrew* has the article: referring to <sup>24826</sup>Jeremiah 48:26, “Was not Israel (*the whole nation*) *the* object of derision to thee?” Therefore, Moab is to suffer as formerly for its exultation over the calamity (<sup>4270</sup>2 Kings 17:6) of the ten tribes under the Assyrian Shalmaneser (<sup>2851</sup>Isaiah 15:1-16:14), so now for its exultation over the fall of Judah, under the Chaldean Nebuchadnezzar. God takes up His people's cause as His own (<sup>3018</sup>Obadiah 1:13-18).

**was he ... among thieves** — (<sup>2426</sup>Jeremiah 2:26). Proverbial. What did Israel do to deserve such derision? *Was he detected in theft*, that thou didst so *exult* over him *in speaking of him*? Though guilty before God, Israel was guiltless towards thee.

**since** — “since ever” thou didst begin speaking of him.

**skippedst for joy** — at Israel's calamity [CALVIN]; or, “thou didst *shake thy head*” in “derision” [MAURER].

28. Doves often have their nests in the “sides” of caverns. No longer shalt thou have cities to shelter thee: thou shalt have to flee for shelter to caves and deserts (<sup>4876</sup>Psalms 55:6,8 <sup>2124</sup>Song of Solomon 2:14).

29. **pride** — (<sup>2369</sup>Isaiah 16:6,7). Moab was the trumpeter of his own fame. Jeremiah adds “loftiness and arrogancy” to Isaiah's picture, so that Moab had not only not been bettered by the chastisement previously endured as foretold by Isaiah, but had even become worse; so that his guilt, and therefore his sentence of punishment, are increased now. Six times Moab's pride (or the synonyms) are mentioned, to show the exceeding hatefulness of his sin.

30. **I know** — Moab's “proud arrogancy” (<sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 48:29) or “wrath,” against My people, is not unknown to Me.

**it shall not be so** — The result shall *not* be so as he thinks: *his lies shall not so effect* what he aims at by them. CALVIN translates, “his lies are not right

(that is, his vauntings are vain because God will not give them effect); they shall not do so” as they project in their minds, for God will set at naught their plans.

**31. *I will cry ... for ... Moab*** — Not that it deserves pity, but the prophet’s “crying” for it vividly represents the greatness of the calamity.

***Kir-heres*** — Kir-hareseth, in <sup>2367</sup>Isaiah 16:7; see on <sup>2367</sup>Isaiah 16:7. It means “the city of potters,” or else “the city of the sun” [GROTIUS]. Here “the *men* of Kir-heres” are substituted for “the *foundations* of Kir-hareseth,” in <sup>2367</sup>Isaiah 16:7. The change answers probably to the different bearing of the disaster under Nebuchadnezzar, as compared with that former one under Shalmaneser.

**32. *with the weeping*** — with the same weeping as Jazer, now vanquished, wept with for the destruction of its vines. The same calamity shall befall thee, Sibmah, as befell Jazer. The *Hebrew* preposition here is different from that in <sup>2369</sup>Isaiah 16:9, for which reason MAURER translates, “with *more than* the weeping of Jazer.” *English Version* understands it of the *continuation* of the weeping; after they have wept for Jazer, fresh subject of lamentation will present itself for the wasting of the vine-abounding Sibmah.

***plants ... gone over ... sea of Jazer*** — As the *Septuagint* reads “*cities* of Jazer,” and as no traces of a lake near Jazer are found, the reading of *English Version* is doubtful. Retaining the present reading, we avoid the difficulty by translating [GROTIUS], “Thy plants (that is, *citizens*: alluding to the ‘vine’) are gone over the sea (that is, shall be transported beyond the sea to Cyprus, and such distant lands subject to Babylon; and this, too, in summertime), whereas Jazer (that is, the men of Jazer) reached the sea” (shore only, but are not transported beyond the sea); so that worse shall befall thee than befalls Jazer.

***spoiler*** — Nebuzara-dan.

**33. *the plentiful field*** — rather, “Carmel”: as the parallel “land of Moab” requires, though in <sup>2369</sup>Isaiah 16:10, it is “the plentiful field.” Joy is taken away as from the nearer regions (Canaan and Palestine), so from the farther “land of Moab”; what has happened to Judah shall befall Moab, too (<sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 48:26,27) [MAURER]. However, Moab alone seems to be spoken of here; nor does the parallelism forbid “plentiful field” answering to “Moab.” *English Version* is therefore better.

***shouting*** — repeated; as at the conclusion of the vintage, men sing over and over again the same cry of joy. A shouting shall be heard, but not the

joyous shouting of laborers treading the grapes, but the terrible battle cry of the foe.

**34. *From the cry of Heshbon***, etc. — Those who fly from Heshbon on its capture shall continue the cry even as far as Elealeh ...&nbsp;. There will be continued cries in all quarters, from one end to the other, everywhere slaughter and wasting.

***as an heifer of three years old*** — Moab heretofore not having known foreign yoke, and in its full strength, is compared to an heifer of three years old, never yet yoked, nor as yet worn out with many birth-givings (compare *Note*, see on <sup><2315></sup>Isaiah 15:5).

***waters ... of Nimrim*** — that is, the *well-watered* and therefore luxuriant pastures of Nimrim.

***desolate*** — The *Hebrew* is stronger: not merely shall be “desolate,” but *desolation* itself multiplied: *plural*, “desolations.” The most fertile tracts shall be dried up.

**35. *him that offereth*** — namely, *whole burnt offerings* as the *Hebrew* requires [GROTIUS]. Compare the awful burnt offering of the king of Moab (<sup><1012></sup>2 Kings 3:27).

***high places*** — (<sup><2362></sup>Isaiah 16:12).

**36.** (See on <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 15:7; <sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 16:11).

***like pipes*** — a plaintive instrument, therefore used at funerals and in general mourning.

***riches ... gotten*** — literally, *the abundance ... that which is over and above* the necessities of life. GROTIUS translates, “They who have been left remaining shall perish”; they who have not been slain by the enemy shall perish by disease and famine.

**37.** (See on <sup><2415></sup>Jeremiah 47:5; <sup><2312></sup>Isaiah 15:2,3).

***upon all ... hands*** — that is, arms, in which such cuttings used to be made in token of grief (compare <sup><2817></sup>Zechariah 13:6).

**38. *vessel ... no pleasure*** — (See <sup><2228></sup>Jeremiah 22:28); a vessel cast aside by the potter as refuse, not answering his design.

**39. *it*** — Moab.

***How ... how*** — prodigious, yet sure to happen.

**turned the back** — not daring to show her face.

**derision ... dismaying to all** — a derision to some; a dismaying to others in beholding such a judgment of God, fearing a like fate for themselves.

**40. he** — Nebuzara-dan, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar.

**as ... eagle** — not to bear them “on eagles’ wings” (<sup><1294></sup>Exodus 19:4 <sup><1521></sup>Deuteronomy 32:11,12), as God does His people, but to pounce on them as a prey (<sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 49:22 <sup><1534></sup>Deuteronomy 28:49 <sup><3108></sup>Habakkuk 1:8).

**41. as ... woman in ... pangs** — (<sup><2138></sup>Isaiah 13:8).

**42.** (See on <sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 48:26).

**43, 44.** (See on <sup><2347></sup>Isaiah 24:17; <sup><2348></sup>Isaiah 24:18).

**44.** When thou thinkest thou hast escaped one kind of danger, a fresh one will start up.

**45. under ... shadow of Heshbon** — They thought that they would be safe in Heshbon.

**because of the force** — that is, “they that fled because of the force” of *the enemy*: they that fled *from* it. GLASSIUS translates, “through want of strength.” So the *Hebrew* particle is translated (<sup><1942></sup>Psalm 109:24), “faileth of fatness,” that is, “faileth through *want* of fatness”; also <sup><2749></sup>Lamentations 4:9.

**but a fire**, etc. — copied in part from Sihon’s hymn of victory (<sup><1017></sup>Numbers 21:27,28). The old “proverb” shall hold good again. As in ancient times Sihon, king of the Amorites, issued forth from his city, Heshbon, as a devouring “flame” and consumed Moab, so now the Chaldeans, making Heshbon their starting-point, shall advance to the destruction of Moab.

**midst of Sihon** — that is, the city of Sihon.

**corner of Moab** — that is, Moab from one corner to the other.

**crown of ... head** — the most *elevated* points of Moab. Making some alterations, he here copies Balaam’s prophecy (<sup><1047></sup>Numbers 24:17). *Margin* there translates “princes” for corners; if so, “crown of ... head” here refers to the nobles.

**tumultuous ones** — *sons of tumult*; those who have tumultuously revolted from Babylon. Heshbon passed from the Amorite to the Israelite sway.

Moab had wrested it from Israel and helped the Chaldeans against the Jews; but revolting from Babylon, they brought ruin on themselves in turn.

**46.** Copied from <sup><0213></sup>Numbers 21:29.

**47.** Restoration promised to Moab, for the sake of righteous Lot, their progenitor (<sup><0137></sup>Genesis 19:37 <sup><0206></sup>Exodus 20:6 <sup><0880></sup>Psalms 89:30-33).

Compare as to Egypt, <sup><0466></sup>Jeremiah 46:26; Ammon, <sup><0406></sup>Jeremiah 49:6; Elam, <sup><0439></sup>Jeremiah 49:39. Gospel blessings, temporal and spiritual, to the Gentiles in the last days, are intended.

# CHAPTER 49

## JEREMIAH 49:1-39.

### PREDICTIONS AS TO AMMON, IDUMEA, DAMASCUS, KEDAR, HAZOR, AND ELAM.

The event of the prophecy as to Ammon preceded that as to Moab (see on <sup><440></sup>Jeremiah 49:3); and in <sup><300></sup>Ezekiel 21:26-28, the destruction of Ammon is subjoined to the deposition of Zedekiah.

**1. *Hath Israel ... no heir?*** — namely, to occupy the land of Gad, after it itself has been carried away captive by Shalmaneser. Ammon, like Moab, descended from Lot, lay north of Moab, from which it was separated by the river Arnon, and east of Reuben and Gad (<sup><613></sup>Joshua 13:24,25) on the same side of Jordan. It seized on Gad when Israel was carried captive. Judah was by the right of kindred the heir, not Ammon; but Ammon joined with Nebuchadnezzar against Judah and Jerusalem (<sup><124></sup>2 Kings 24:2) and exulted over its fall (<sup><880></sup>Psalms 83:4-7,8 <sup><300></sup>Zephaniah 2:8,9). It had already, in the days of Jeroboam, in Israel's affliction, tried to "enlarge its border" (<sup><124></sup>2 Kings 14:26 <sup><300></sup>Amos 1:1,13).

***their king*** — (<sup><300></sup>Amos 1:15); referring to Melchom, their tutelary idol (<sup><300></sup>Zephaniah 1:5); and so the *Septuagint* reads it here as a proper name (<sup><110></sup>1 Kings 11:5,33 <sup><123></sup>2 Kings 23:13). The Ammonite god is said to do what *they* do, namely, occupy the Israelite land of Gad. To Jehovah, the theocratic "King" of Israel, the land belonged of right; so that their Molech or Melchom was a usurper-*king*.

***his people*** — the people of Melchom, "their king." Compare "people of Chemosh," <sup><486></sup>Jeremiah 48:46.

**2. *Rabbah*** — "the great," metropolis of Ammon (<sup><102></sup>2 Samuel 12:26-30). Its destruction is foretold also in <sup><325></sup>Ezekiel 25:5 <sup><300></sup>Amos 1:14,15.

***her daughters*** — the towns and villages, dependencies of the metropolis (<sup><655></sup>Joshua 15:45).

***shall ... be heir*** — shall *possess* those who possessed him. The full accomplishment of this is still future; partially fulfilled under the Maccabees (I Maccabees 5:6).



3. **Heshbon ... Ai** — Nebuchadnezzar, coming from the north, first attacked Ammon, then its brother and neighbor, Moab. As Ai of Ammon had already suffered destruction, Heshbon of Moab being near it might well fear the same fate.

**hedges** — Their cities being destroyed, the outcasts have no place of shelter save behind the “hedges” of vineyards and gardens; or else the *enclosures* of their villages.

**their king** — Melchom, the idol, as the mention of “his priests” shows (compare <sup><2487></sup>Jeremiah 48:7).

4. **thy flowing valley** — rather, “thy valley shall flow,” namely with the blood of the slain; in sad contrast to their “valleys” in which they had heretofore “gloried,” as *flowing* with milk and honey [GROTIUS]. Or else, as *Margin*, “shall flow away.”

**backsliding** — apostate from Jehovah, the God of their father Lot, to Molech.

**treasures** — her resources for resisting the foe.

**Who shall**, etc. — Who can come ... (<sup><2213></sup>Jeremiah 21:13).

5. **every man right forth** — whithersoever chance may lead him (<sup><2465></sup>Jeremiah 46:5 <sup><0197></sup>Genesis 19:17); straight *before him*, onwards at random (<sup><3043></sup>Amos 4:3).

**none ... gather up him**, etc. — There shall be none to *gather* together the *wandering* fugitives, so as to care for them and restore them to their own homes.

6. (Compare <sup><2487></sup>Jeremiah 48:47). For the sake of “righteous” Lot their progenitor. Partially fulfilled under Cyrus; in gospel times more fully.

7. **Concerning Edom** — a distinct prophecy, copied in part from Obadiah, but with the freedom of one himself inspired and foretelling a later calamity. Obadiah’s was fulfilled probably in Sennacherib’s time (compare <sup><2345></sup>Isaiah 34:5 <sup><3001></sup>Amos 1:11); Jeremiah’s about the same time as his preceding prophecies (<sup><2492></sup>Jeremiah 49:12 <sup><2522></sup>Ezekiel 25:12).

**wisdom** — for which the Arabs and the people of Teman (a city of Edom) in particular, were famed (<sup><0335></sup>Genesis 36:15 <sup><1030></sup>1 Kings 4:30; see Job, everywhere; <sup><3008></sup>Obadiah 1:8).

**vanished** — literally “poured out,” that is, exhausted (compare <sup>230B</sup>Isaiah 19:3, *Margin*) [MAURER]. Or, as the kindred Ethiopic word means, “worn out” [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU].

8. **turn** — namely, your backs in flight.

**dwell deep** — in deep defiles and caves [GROTIUS], which abound in Idumea. Others refer it to the Arab custom of retiring into the depth of the desert when avoiding an offended foe (<sup>248B</sup>Jeremiah 49:30).

**Dedan** — a tribe bordering on and made subject by Idumea; descended from Jokshan, son of Abraham and Keturah (<sup>123A</sup>Genesis 25:1-3).

**Esau** — The naming of Edom’s progenitor, reprobated by God, recalls the remembrance of the old curse on him for his profanity, both his sin and its punishment being perpetuated in his descendants (<sup>526</sup>Hebrews 12:16,17).

9. (<sup>305B</sup>Obadiah 1:5). *Grape gatherers, yea even thieves*, leave something behind them; but the Chaldeans will sweep Idumea clean of everything.

10. Edom became politically extinct after the time of the Romans.

**uncovered his secret places** — where he hid himself (<sup>248B</sup>Jeremiah 49:8) and his treasures (<sup>248B</sup>Isaiah 45:3). I have caused that nothing should be so hidden as that the conqueror should not find it.

**brethren** — Ammon.

**neighbors** — the Philistines.

11. Thy fatherless and widows must rest their hope in God alone, as none of the adult males shall be left alive, so desperate will be the affairs of Edom. The verse also, besides this threat, implies a promise of mercy to Esau in God’s good time, as there was to Moab and Ammon (<sup>240B</sup>Jeremiah 49:6 <sup>248B</sup>Jeremiah 48:47); the extinction of the adult males is the prominent idea (compare <sup>248B</sup>Jeremiah 49:12).

12. (Compare <sup>225B</sup>Jeremiah 25:15,16,29).

**they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup** — the Jews to whom, by virtue of the covenant relation, it did not belong to drink the cup. It might have been expected that they would be spared. He regards not the merits of the Jews, for they were as bad or worse than others: but the grace and adoption of God; it is just and natural (“judgment”) that God should pardon His sons sooner than aliens [CALVIN].

13. **Bozrah** — (See on <sup>248B</sup>Jeremiah 48:24).

14. (<sup>3000</sup>Obadiah 1:1-3).

*ambassador ... unto the heathen* — a messenger from God to stir up the Chaldeans against Edom.

15. David and Joab had already humbled Edom (<sup>4084</sup>2 Samuel 8:14).

16. *terribleness* — the terror which thou didst inspire into others.

*deceived thee* — rendered thee proudly confident, as if none would dare to assail thee.

*dwellest in ... rock* — Petra, the chief of Idumea, was cut in the rocks; its ruins are very remarkable. The whole south of Idumea abounds in cave dwellings and rocks.

*though ... nest ... eagle* — (<sup>4897</sup>Job 39:27 <sup>3008</sup>Obadiah 1:3,4). The eagle builds its nest in the highest craggy eyry.

17. (Compare <sup>4081</sup>1 Kings 9:8).

18. (<sup>2804</sup>Jeremiah 50:40 <sup>4623</sup>Deuteronomy 29:23 <sup>3041</sup>Amos 4:11).

*no man shall abide there* — that is, of the Idumeans. The Romans had a garrison there.

19. *he* — Nebuchadnezzar, or Nebuzara-dan; the name would at once suggest itself to the minds of the hearers (<sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 48:40 46:18).

*swelling* — as a lion which the overflow of the Jordan forced out of his lair on the banks, to ascend the neighboring heights [CALVIN]. See as to the translation, “pride of the Jordan,” see on <sup>2426</sup>Jeremiah 12:5.

*habitation of ... strong* — the fastnesses of Idumea (compare <sup>0221</sup>Numbers 24:21). MAURER translates, “An ever verdant (literally, ‘perennial’) pasturage,” that is, Idumea heretofore having enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity; so in <sup>2440</sup>Jeremiah 49:20 the image is retained, the Idumeans being compared to “a flock,” and their king to “a shepherd,” in this verse, and the enemy to “a lion” (compare <sup>2807</sup>Jeremiah 50:17-19). *English Version* accords more with the *Hebrew*.

*suddenly* — “in the twinkling of an eye,” as the *Hebrew* implies.

*Vim ... her* — I will make *Nebuzara-dan* enter *Idumea*, and then, having in the twinkling of an eye effected the conquest, go away speedily: elsewhere. Instead of “but,” translate, “for.” GROTIUS translates, “run upon her,” or “to her,” instead of “run away from her.” MAURER understands it, “I will make him (the Idumean) run away from her” (that is, from his own

land); the similar change of reference of the pronouns (<sup>2604</sup>Jeremiah 50:44) favors this.

*who is a chosen man*, etc. — God calls the *choicest* warriors to Him, to set “*over*” the work of devastating Idumea. God will surely execute His purpose, for He can call forth from all sides the agents He chooses.

*who is like me?* — (<sup>1051</sup>Exodus 15:11).

*who will appoint me the time?* — namely, for entering into a trial in judgment with Me (see *Margin*). Image from law courts (<sup>3099</sup>Job 9:19).

*shepherd* — leader of the Idumeans; following up the previous image, “a lion”; no Idumean shepherd shall withstand the lion sent by Jehovah (<sup>3410</sup>Job 41:10), or save the Idumean flock.

**20. *least of the flock*** — the weakest and humblest of the Chaldean host. Compare <sup>2063</sup>Jeremiah 6:3, where the hostile leaders and their hosts are called “shepherds and their flocks.”

*draw ... out* — “shall drag them away captive” [GROTIUS]; *shall drag them to and fro*, as a lion (<sup>3409</sup>Jeremiah 49:19) does feeble sheep [MAURER].

*with them* — that is, the habitation which they possess.

**21. *was heard in*** — that is, shall be heard *at*.

*Red Sea* — a considerable distance from Idumea; though the district at the Elantic bay of the Red Sea originally belonged to Idumea, and the sea itself was called from Edom, that is, “red” (<sup>1023</sup>Genesis 25:30, *Margin*). Others translate, “the weedy sea” (*Margin*), and derive the name, “Red Sea,” from its red weeds; the former view is preferable.

**22.** (Compare <sup>2480</sup>Jeremiah 48:40,41).

*Bozrah* — (See on <sup>2483</sup>Jeremiah 48:24).

**23.** Prophecy as to Damascus, etc. (<sup>2370</sup>Isaiah 17:1 10:9). The *kingdom* of Damascus was destroyed by Assyria, but the *city* revived, and it is as to the latter Jeremiah now prophesies. The fulfillment was probably about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 10.9,7].

*Hamath is confounded* — at the tidings of the overthrow of the neighboring Damascus.

**on the sea** — that is, at the sea; the dwellers there are alarmed. Other manuscripts read, “like the sea.” “There is anxiety (restless) as is the sea: they cannot quiet it,” that is, it cannot be quieted (<sup><2574></sup>Isaiah 57:20).

**it** — Whatever dwellers are there “cannot be quiet.”

**25. city of praise** — The prophet, in the person of a citizen of Damascus deploring its calamity, calls it “the city of praise,” that is, celebrated with praises everywhere for its beauty (<sup><4899></sup>Jeremiah 33:9 51:41). “How is it possible that such a city *has not been left* whole — has not been spared by the foe?” Compare *left*, <sup><4775></sup>Luke 17:35,36. So Israel “left” standing some of the Canaanite cities (<sup><6113></sup>Joshua 11:13).

**of my joy** — that is, in which I delighted.

**26. Therefore** — that is, Since Damascus is doomed to fall, *therefore*, etc.

**27. palaces of Ben-hadad** — that palace from which so many evils and such cruelty to Israel emanated; thus implying the *cause* of Damascus’ overthrow. Not the Ben-hadad of <sup><4232></sup>2 Kings 13:3 Amos 1:4; it was a common name of the Syrian kings (compare <sup><1158></sup>1 Kings 15:18; meaning “son of Hadad,” the idol).

**28. Kedar** — son of Ishmael (<sup><4253></sup>Genesis 25:13). The Kedarenes led a wandering predatory life in Arabia-Petraea, as the Bedouin Arabs (<sup><4216></sup>2 Chronicles 21:16,17 <sup><3005></sup>Psalms 120:5). Kedar means “blackness” (So 1:5).

**Hazor** — not the city in Palestine, but a district in Arabia-Petraea. “Kingdoms” refer to the several combinations of clans, each under its own sheik.

**men of the east** — Kedar and Hazor were east of Judea (<sup><4768></sup>Judges 6:3 <sup><3003></sup>Job 1:3).

**29. tents** — in which they dwelt, from which they are called Scenites, that is, tent dwellers.

**curtains** — namely, with which the tents were covered (<sup><3404></sup>Jeremiah 4:20 10:20 <sup><4942></sup>Psalms 104:2).

**they shall cry unto them, Fear**, etc. — *The foe*, on crying, Fear ..., shall discomfit them (the Kedarenes) by their mere cry.

**30.** (See on <sup><3408></sup>Jeremiah 49:8). No conqueror would venture to follow them into the desert.

**31. wealthy** — rather, “tranquil” (<sup><1340></sup>1 Chronicles 4:40).

**neither gates nor bars** — The Arabs, lying out of the track of the contending powers of Asia and Africa, took no measures of defense and had neither walled cities nor gates (<sup>2631</sup>Ezekiel 38:11). They thought their scanty resources and wilderness position would tempt no foe.

**alone** — separated from other nations, without allies; and from one another scattered asunder. So as to Israel's isolation (<sup>4023</sup>Numbers 23:9 <sup>6538</sup>Deuteronomy 33:28 <sup>3074</sup>Micah 7:14).

**32. camels** — their chief possessions; not fields or vineyards.

**in utmost ... corners** — who seemed least likely to be dispersed. Or else, “having the hair shaven (or clipped) in angles” (<sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 9:26,25:23) [GROTIUS].

**calamity from all sides** — which will force even those in “corners” to “scatter” themselves.

**33.** (<sup>3008</sup>Malachi 1:3).

**34. Elam** — part of Susiana, west of Persia proper, but used to designate Persia in general. Elam proper, or Elymais, nearer Judea than Persia, is probably here meant; it had helped Nebuchadnezzar against Judea; hence its punishment. It may have been idolatrous, whereas Persia proper was mainly monotheistic.

**35. bow** — Elam was famed for its bowmen (<sup>2206</sup>Isaiah 22:6).

**chief of their might** — in opposition to “bow,” that is, bowmen, who constituted their main strength.

**36. four winds**, etc. — Nebuchadnezzar's army containing soldiers from the four quarters.

**37. consumed** — as a distinct nation (<sup>2708</sup>Daniel 8:2-27). Fulfilled under Alexander and his successors.

**38.** I will show Myself King by My judgments there, as though My tribunal were erected there. The throne of Cyrus, God's instrument, set up over Media, of which Elam was a part, may be meant [GROTIUS]; or rather, that of Nebuchadnezzar (<sup>2430</sup>Jeremiah 43:10). Then the restoration of Elam (<sup>2449</sup>Jeremiah 49:39) will refer *partly* to that which took place on the reduction of Babylon by Cyrus, prince of Persia and Media.

**39. latter days** — The *full* restoration belongs to gospel times. Elamites were among the first who heard and accepted it (<sup>4105</sup>Acts 2:9).

# CHAPTER 50

## ~~2610~~ JEREMIAH 50:1-46.

### BABYLON'S COMING DOWNFALL; ISRAEL'S REDEMPTION.

After the predictions of judgment to be inflicted on other nations by Babylon, follows this one against Babylon itself, the longest prophecy, consisting of one hundred verses. The date of utterance was the fourth year of Zedekiah, when Seraiah, to whom it was committed, was sent to Babylon (~~2619~~ Jeremiah 51:59,60). The repetitions in it make it likely that it consists of prophecies uttered at different times, now collected by Jeremiah to console the Jews in exile and to vindicate God's ways by exhibiting the final doom of Babylon, the enemy of the people of God, after her long prosperity. The style, imagery, and dialogues prove its genuineness in opposition to those who deny this. It shows his faithfulness; though under obligation to the king of Babylon, he owed a higher one to God, who directed him to prophesy against Babylon.

1. Compare ~~2611~~ Isaiah 45:1-47:15. But as the time of fulfillment drew nearer, the prophecies are now proportionally more distinct than then.

2. *Declare ... among ... nations* — who would rejoice at the fall of Babylon their oppressor.

*standard* — to indicate the place of meeting to the nations where they were to hear the good news of Babylon's fall [ROSENMULLER]; or, the signal to summon the nations together against Babylon (~~2612~~ Jeremiah 51:12,27), [MAURER].

*Bel* — the tutelary god of Babylon; the same idol as the Phoenician Baal, that is, lord, the sun (~~2610~~ Isaiah 46:1).

*confounded* — because unable to defend the city under their protection.

*Merodach* — another Babylonian idol; meaning in Syria "little lord"; from which Merodach-baladan took his name.

3. *a nation* — the Medes, north of Babylon (~~2614~~ Jeremiah 51:48). The devastation of Babylon here foretold includes not only that by Cyrus, but also that more utter one by Darius, who took Babylon by artifice when it

had revolted from Persia, and mercilessly slaughtered the inhabitants, hanging four thousand of the nobles; also the final desertion of Babylon, owing to Seleucia having been built close by under Seleucus Nicanor.

4. Fulfilled only in part when some few of the ten tribes of “Israel” joined Judah in a “covenant” with God, at the restoration of Judah to its land (<sup><4088></sup>Nehemiah 9:38 10:29). The full event is yet to come (<sup><2609></sup>Jeremiah 31:9 <sup><3011></sup>Hosea 1:11 <sup><3210></sup>Zechariah 12:10).

**weeping** — with joy at their restoration beyond all hope; and with sorrow at the remembrance of their sins and sufferings (<sup><4182></sup>Ezra 3:12,13 <sup><4305></sup>Psalms 126:5,6).

**seek ... Lord** — (<sup><2075></sup>Hosea 3:5).

5. **thitherward** — rather, “hitherward,” Jeremiah’s prophetic standpoint being at Zion. “Faces hitherward” implies their steadfastness of purpose not to be turned aside by any difficulties on the way.

**perpetual covenant** — in contrast to the old covenant “which they brake” (<sup><2631></sup>Jeremiah 31:31, etc. <sup><2630></sup>Jeremiah 32:40). They shall return to their God first, then to their own land.

6. (<sup><2516></sup>Isaiah 53:6).

**on the mountains** — whereon they sacrificed to idols (<sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 2:20 3:6,23).

**resting-place** — for the “sheep,” continuing the image; *Jehovah* is the resting-place of His sheep (<sup><4123></sup>Matthew 11:28). They rest in His “bosom” (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 40:11). Also *His temple* at Zion, their “rest,” because it is His (<sup><4128></sup>Psalms 132:8,14).

7. **devoured** — (<sup><4946></sup>Psalms 79:7). “Found them” implies that they were exposed to the attacks of those who ever happened to meet them.

**adversaries said** — for instance, Nebuzara-dan (<sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 40:2,3; compare Zechariah 11:5). The Gentiles acknowledged some supreme divinity. The Jews’ guilt was so palpable that they were condemned even in the judgment of heathens. Some knowledge of God’s peculiar relation to Judea reached its heathen invaders from the prophets (<sup><2418></sup>Jeremiah 2:3 <sup><2196></sup>Daniel 9:16); hence the strong language they use of *Jehovah* here, not as worshippers of Him themselves, but as believing Him to be the tutelary God of *Judah* (“the hope of *their* fathers,” <sup><4224></sup>Psalms 22:4; they do not say *our* hope), as each country was thought to have its *local god*, whose power extended no farther.



**habitation** — (<sup><900P</sup>Psalm 90:1 91:1). Alluding to the tabernacle, or, as in <sup><544E</sup>Ezekiel 34:14, “fold,” which carries out the image in <sup><280J</sup>Jeremiah 50:6, “resting-place” of the “sheep.” But it can only mean “habitation” (<sup><282J</sup>Jeremiah 31:23), which confirms *English Version* here.

**hope of their fathers** — This especially condemned the Jews that their apostasy was from that God whose faithfulness their fathers had experienced. At the same time these “adversaries” unconsciously use language which corrects their own notions. The covenant with the Jews’ “fathers” is not utterly set aside by their sin, as their adversaries thought; there is still “a habitation” or refuge for them with the God of *their fathers*.

8. (<sup><250J</sup>Jeremiah 51:6,45 <sup><282P</sup>Isaiah 48:20 Zechariah 2:6,7 <sup><680R</sup>Revelation 18:4). Immediately avail yourselves of the opportunity of escape.

**be as ... he-goats before ... flocks** — Let each try to be foremost in returning, animating the weak, as he-goats lead the flock; such were the companions of Ezra (<sup><500E</sup>Ezra 1:5,6).

9. **from thence** — that is, from the north country.

**expert** — literally, “prosperous.” Besides “might,” “expertness” is needed, that an arrow may do execution. The *Margin* has a different *Hebrew* reading; “destroying,” literally, “bereaving, childless-making” (<sup><245J</sup>Jeremiah 15:7). The *Septuagint* and *Syriac* support *English Version*.

**In vain** — without killing him at whom it was aimed (<sup><102S</sup>2 Samuel 1:22).

11. (<sup><2470P</sup>Isaiah 47:6).

**grown fat** — and so, skip wantonly.

**at grass** — fat and frisky. But there is a disagreement of gender in *Hebrew* reading thus. The *Keri* is better: “a heifer *threshing*”; the strongest were used for threshing, and as the law did not allow their mouth to be muzzled in threshing (<sup><1230D</sup>Deuteronomy 25:4), they waxed wanton with eating.

**bellow as bulls** — rather, “neigh as *steeds*,” literally, “strong ones,” a poetical expression for *steeds* (see on <sup><2486J</sup>Jeremiah 8:16) [MAURER].

12. **Your mother** — Babylon, the metropolis of the empire.

**hindermost** — marvellous change, that Babylon, once the queen of the world, should be now the hindermost of nations, and at last, becoming “a desert,” cease to be a nation!

13. (<sup><243P</sup>Isaiah 13:20).

14. Summons to the Median army to attack Babylon.

*against the Lord* — By oppressing His people, their cause is His cause. Also by profaning His sacred vessels (<sup><27012></sup>Daniel 5:2).

15. *Shout* — Inspirit one another to the onset with the battle cry.

*given ... hand* — an idiom for, “submitted to” the conquerors (<sup><13204></sup>1 Chronicles 29:24, *Margin*; <sup><27019></sup>Lamentations 5:6).

*as she hath done, do unto her* — just retribution in kind. She had destroyed many, so must she be destroyed (<sup><13208></sup>Psalm 137:8). So as to spiritual Babylon (<sup><68016></sup>Revelation 18:6). This is right because “it is the vengeance of the Lord”; but this will not justify *private* revenge in kind (<sup><10544></sup>Matthew 5:44 <sup><19211></sup>Romans 12 19-21); even the Old Testament law forbade this, though breathing a sterner spirit than the New Testament (<sup><12234></sup>Exodus 23:4,5 <sup><12521></sup>Proverbs 25:21,22).

16. Babylon had the extent rather of a nation than of a city. Therefore grain was grown within the city wall sufficient to last for a long siege [ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, 3.2; PLINY, 18.17]. Conquerors usually spare agriculturists, but in this case *all* alike were to be “cut off.”

*for fear of ... oppressing sword* — because of the sword of the oppressor.

*every one to his people* — from which they had been removed to Babylon from all quarters by the Chaldean conquerors (<sup><25119></sup>Jeremiah 51:9 <sup><23314></sup>Isaiah 13:14).

17. *lions* — hostile kings (<sup><24017></sup>Jeremiah 4:7 49:19).

*Assyria* — (<sup><12706></sup>2 Kings 17:6, Shalmaneser; <sup><15102></sup>Ezra 4:2, Esar-haddon).

*Nebuchadnezzar* — (<sup><12410></sup>2 Kings 24:10,14).

18. *punish ... king of Babylon* — Nabonidus, or Labynitus.

*as ... punished ... Assyrian* — Sennacherib and other kings [GROTIUS] (<sup><12657></sup>2 Kings 19:37).

19. (<sup><25511></sup>Isaiah 65:10 <sup><15413></sup>Ezekiel 34:13,14).

20. The specification of “Israel,” as well as Judah, shows the reference is to times yet to come.

*iniquity ... none* — not merely idolatry, which ceased among the Jews ever since the Babylonian captivity, but chiefly their rejection of Messiah. As in a cancelled debt, it shall be as if it had never been; God, for Christ’s sake,

shall treat them as innocent (<sup>2834</sup>Jeremiah 31:34). Without cleansing away of sin, remission of punishment would be neither to the honor of God nor to the highest interests of the elect.

**whom I reserve** — the elect “remnant” (<sup>2009</sup>Isaiah 1:9). The “residue” (Zechariah 14:2 13:8,9).

**21. Merathaim** — a symbolical name for Babylon, the doubly rebellious, namely, against God. Compare <sup>2814</sup>Jeremiah 50:24, “thou hast striven against the Lord”; and <sup>2819</sup>Jeremiah 50:29, “proud against the Lord.” The “doubly” refers to: first, the *Assyrian’s* oppression of Israel; next, the kindred *Chaldean’s* oppression of Judah (compare <sup>2807</sup>Jeremiah 50:17-20,33; especially <sup>2808</sup>Jeremiah 50:18).

**Pekod** — (<sup>2829</sup>Ezekiel 23:23); a chief province of Assyria, in which Nineveh, now overthrown, once lay. But, as in Merathaim, the allusion is to the meaning of *Pekod*, namely, “visitation”; the inhabitants whose time of deserved visitation in punishment is come; not, however, without reference to the now Babylonian province, Pekod. The visitation on Babylon was a following up of that on Assyria.

**after them** — even *their posterity*, and all that is still left of Babylon, until the very name is extinct [GROTIUS]. Devastate the city, *after* its inhabitants have deserted it.

**all ... I ... commanded** — by Isaiah (<sup>2311</sup>Isaiah 13:1, etc.).

**23. hammer** — that is, Babylon, so called because of its ponderous destructive power; just as “Martel,” that is, “a little hammer,” was the surname of a king of the Franks (<sup>2346</sup>Isaiah 14:6).

**24. I** — Thou hast to do with God, not merely with men.

**taken ... not aware** — HERODOTUS relates that one half of the city was taken before those in the other half were “aware” of it. Cyrus turned the waters of the Euphrates where it was defended into a different channel, and so entered the city by the dried-up channel at night, by the upper and lower gates (<sup>2131</sup>Daniel 5:30,31).

**25. weapons of his indignation** — the Medes and Persians (<sup>2805</sup>Isaiah 13:5).

**26. from the utmost border** — namely, of the earth. Or, from all sides LUDOVICUS DE DIEU].

**storehouses** — or, “her houses filled with men and goods” [MICHAELIS]. When Cyrus took it, the provisions found there were enough to have lasted for many years.

**as heaps** — make of the once glorious city *heaps* of ruins. Vast mounds of rubbish now mark the site of ancient Babylon. “Tread her as heaps of corn which are wont to be trodden down in the threshing-floor” [GROTIUS].

**27. bullocks** — that is, princes and strong warriors (<sup><2462></sup>Jeremiah 46:21 <sup><4922></sup>Psalms 22:12 <sup><23407></sup>Isaiah 34:7).

**go down to ... slaughter** — The slaughterhouses lay low beside the river; therefore it is said, “go down”; appropriate to Babylon on the Euphrates, the avenue through which the slaughterers entered the city.

**28. declare in Zion ... temple** — Some Jews “fleeing” from Babylon at its fall shall tell in Judea how God avenged the cause of Zion and her temple that had been profaned (<sup><3523></sup>Jeremiah 52:13 <sup><2002></sup>Daniel 1:2 5:2).

**29. archers** — literally, “very many and powerful”; hence the *Hebrew* word is used of *archers* (<sup><8613></sup>Job 16:13) from the multitude and force of their arrows.

**according to all that she hath done** — (See on <sup><2515></sup>Jeremiah 50:15).

**proud against the Lord** — not merely cruel towards men (<sup><24701></sup>Isaiah 47:10).

**30.** (See on <sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 49:26).

**in the streets** — The Babylonians were so discouraged by having lost some battles that they retired within their walls and would not again meet Cyrus in the field.

**31. most proud** — literally, “pride”; that is, man of pride; the king of Babylon.

**visit** — punish (<sup><28127></sup>Jeremiah 50:27).

**33. Israel and ... Judah were oppressed** — He anticipates an objection, in order to answer it: Ye have been, no doubt, “oppressed,” therefore ye despair of deliverance; but, remember your “Redeemer is strong,” and therefore can and will deliver you.

**34. strong** — as opposed to the power of Israel’s oppressor (<sup><6688></sup>Revelation 18:8).

**plead ... cause** — as their advocate. Image from a court of justice; appropriate as God delivers His people not by mere might, but by *righteousness*. His plea against Satan and all their enemies is His own everlasting love, reconciling mercy and justice in the Redeemer's work and person (<sup>3709</sup>Micah 7:9 Zechariah 3:1-5 <sup>3111</sup>1 John 2:1).

**give rest ... disquiet** — There is a play on the similarity of sounds in the two *Hebrew* verbs to express more vividly the contrast: “that He may give quiet to the land of Judah (heretofore disquieted by Babylon); but disquiet to the inhabitants of Babylon” (heretofore quietly secure) (<sup>2340F</sup>Isaiah 14:6-8).

**35-37.** The repetition of “A sword” in the beginning of each verse, by the figure *anaphora*, heightens the effect; the reiterated judgment is universal; the same sad stroke of the sword is upon each and all connected with guilty Babylon.

**wise men** — (<sup>2371B</sup>Isaiah 47:13). Babylon boasted that it was the peculiar seat of wisdom and wise men, especially in astronomy and astrology.

**36. liars** — Those whom he before termed “wise men,” he here calls “liars” (impostors), namely, the astrologers (compare <sup>2342C</sup>Isaiah 44:25 <sup>3102</sup>Romans 1:21-25 <sup>3102</sup>1 Corinthians 1:20).

**37. as women** — divested of all manliness (Na 3:13).

**38. drought** — Altering the pointing, this verse will begin as the three previous verses, “A sword.” However, all the pointed manuscripts read, “A drought,” as *English Version*. Cyrus turned off the waters of the Euphrates into a new channel and so marched through the dried-up bed into the city (<sup>2513D</sup>Jeremiah 51:32). Babylonia once was famed for its corn, which often yielded from one to two hundredfold [HERODOTUS]. This was due to its network of water-courses from the Euphrates for irrigation, traces of which [LAYARD] are seen still on all sides, but dry and barren (<sup>2342F</sup>Isaiah 44:27).

**their idols** — literally, “terrors.” They are mad after idols that are more calculated to *frighten* than to attract (<sup>25144</sup>Jeremiah 51:44,47,52 <sup>2701F</sup>Daniel 3:1). Mere bugbears with which to frighten children.

**39. wild beasts of the desert** — wild cats, remarkable for their howl [BOCHART].

**wild beasts of the islands** — jackals (See on <sup>2313D</sup>Isaiah 13:21).

**owls** — rather, “female ostriches”; they delight in solitary places. Literally, “daughters of crying.” Compare as to spiritual Babylon, <sup>2682D</sup>Revelation 18:2.

***no more inhabited for ever*** — The accumulation of phrases is to express the final and utter extinction of Babylon; fulfilled not immediately, but by degrees; Cyrus took away its supremacy. Darius Hystaspes deprived it, when it had rebelled, of its fortifications. Seleucus Nicanor removed its citizens and wealth to Seleucia, which he founded in the neighborhood; and the Parthians removed all that was left to Ctesiphon. Nothing but its walls was left under the Roman emperor Adrian.

40. (<sup>2339</sup>Isaiah 13:19). Repeated from <sup>2498</sup>Jeremiah 49:18.

41-43. (Compare <sup>2022</sup>Jeremiah 6:22-24). The very language used to describe the calamities which Babylon inflicted on Zion is that here employed to describe Babylon's own calamity inflicted by the Medes. Retribution in kind.

***kinds*** — the allies and satraps of the various provinces of the Medo-Persian empire: Armenia, Hyrcania, Lydia, etc.

***coasts*** — the remote parts.

42. ***cruel*** — the character of the Persians, and even of Cyrus, notwithstanding his wish to be thought magnanimous (<sup>2338</sup>Isaiah 13:18).

***like a man*** — So orderly and united is their "array," that the whole army moves to battle as *one man* [GROTIUS].

43. ***hands waxed feeble*** — attempted no resistance; immediately was overcome, as HERODOTUS tells us.

44-46. Repeated mainly from <sup>2499</sup>Jeremiah 49:19-21. The identity of God's principle in His dealing with Edom, and in that with Babylon, is implied by the similarity of language as to both.

46. ***cry ... among the nations*** — In Edom's case it is, "at the cry the noise thereof was heard *in the Red Sea*." The change implies the wider extent to which the crash of Babylon's downfall shall be heard.

# CHAPTER 51

## JEREMIAH 51:1-64.

### CONTINUATION OF THE PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON BEGUN IN THE FIFTIETH CHAPTER.

1. *in the midst of them that rise ... against me* — literally, “in the heart” of them. Compare <sup><2941P></sup>Psalm 46:2, “the midst of the sea,” *Margin*; <sup><3704E></sup>Ezekiel 27:4, “the *heart* of the seas”; *Margin*; <sup><4020M></sup>Matthew 12:40. In the center of the Chaldeans. “Against Me,” because they persecute My people. The cabalistic mode of interpreting *Hebrew* words (by taking the letters in the inverse order of the alphabet, the last letter representing the first, and so on, <sup><2535J></sup>Jeremiah 25:26) would give the very word *Chaldeans* here; but the *mystical* method cannot be intended, as “Babylon” is plainly so called in the immediately preceding parallel clause.

*wind* — God needs not warlike weapons to “destroy” His foes; a *wind* or blast is sufficient; though, no doubt, the “wind” here is the invading host of Medes and Persians (<sup><3041J></sup>Jeremiah 4:11 <sup><29072K></sup>2 Kings 19:7).

2. *fanners* — (See on <sup><2457J></sup>Jeremiah 15:7). The farmers separate the wheat from the chaff; so God’s judgments shall sweep away guilty Babylon as chaff (<sup><3004P></sup>Psalm 1:4).

3. *Against him that bendeth* — namely, the bow; that is, the Babylonian archer.

*let the archer bend* — that is, the Persian archer (<sup><2504J></sup>Jeremiah 50:4). The *Chaldean version* and JEROME, by changing the vowel points, read, “Let not him (the Babylonian) who bendeth his bow bend it.” But the close of the verse is addressed to the Median invaders; therefore it is more likely that the first part of the verse is addressed to them, as in *English Version*, not to the *Babylonians*, to warn them against resistance as vain, as in the *Chaldean version*. The word “bend” is thrice repeated: “Against him that bendeth let him that bendeth bend,” to imply the utmost straining of the bow.

4. (See on <sup><2425J></sup>Jeremiah 49:26; <sup><2530J></sup>Jeremiah 50:30; <sup><2537J></sup>Jeremiah 50:37).

5. *forsaken* — as a widow (*Hebrew*). Israel is not severed from her husband, Jehovah (<sup>2516</sup>Isaiah 54:5-7), by a perpetual divorce.

*though ... sin* — though the land of *Israel* has been filled with sin, that is, with the *punishment of their sin*, devastation. But, as the *Hebrew* means “for,” or “and therefore,” not “though,” translate, “and therefore their (the Chaldeans’) land has been filled with (the penal consequences of) their sin” [GROTIUS].

6. Warning to the Israelite captives to flee from Babylon, lest they should be involved in the punishment of her “iniquity.” So as to spiritual Babylon and her captives (<sup>6684</sup>Revelation 18:4).

7. Babylon is compared to a *cup*, because she was the vessel in the hand of God, to make drunken with His vengeance the other peoples (<sup>2432</sup>Jeremiah 13:12 25:15,16). Compare as to spiritual Babylon, (<sup>6448</sup>Revelation 14:8 17:4). The cup is termed “golden,” to express the splendor and opulence of Babylon; whence also in the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar (<sup>2128</sup>Daniel 2:38) the *head* representing Babylon is of *gold* (compare <sup>2349</sup>Isaiah 14:4).

8, 9. Her friends and confederates, who behold her fall, are invited to her aid. They reply, her case is incurable, and that they must leave her to her fate. (<sup>2319</sup>Isaiah 21:9 <sup>6448</sup>Revelation 14:8 18:2,9).

*balm* — (<sup>2482</sup>Jeremiah 8:22 46:11).

9. *We would have healed* — We attempted to heal.

*her judgment* — *her crimes* provoking God’s “judgments” [GROTIUS].

*reacheth unto heaven* — (<sup>4182</sup>Genesis 18:21 Jon 1:2 <sup>6685</sup>Revelation 18:5). Even the heathen nations perceive that her awful fall must be God’s judgment for her crying sins (<sup>3916</sup>Psalms 9:16 64:9).

10. Next after the speech of the confederates of Babylon, comes that of the Jews celebrating with thanksgivings the promise-keeping faithfulness of their covenant God.

*brought forth*, etc. — (<sup>4576</sup>Psalms 37:6).

*our righteousness* — not the Jews’ merits, but God’s faithfulness to Himself and to His covenant, which constituted the “righteousness” of His people, that is, their *justification* in their controversy with Babylon, the cruel enemy of God and His people. Compare <sup>2316</sup>Jeremiah 23:6, “The Lord *our righteousness*”; <sup>3309</sup>Micah 7:9. *Their* righteousness is *His* righteousness.

*declare in Zion* — (<sup>4923</sup>Psalms 102:13-21).



**11. *Make bright*** — literally, “pure.” Polish and sharpen.

***gather*** — literally, “fill”; that is, gather in full number, so that none be wanting. So, “gave in *full tale*” (<sup>49827</sup>1 Samuel 18:27). GESENIUS, not so well, translates, “Fill *with your bodies* the shields” (compare <sup>2008</sup>Song of Solomon 4:4). He means to tell the Babylonians, Make what preparations you will, all will be in vain (compare <sup>2448</sup>Jeremiah 46:3-6).

***kings of ... Medes*** — He names the Medes rather than the Persians, because Darius, or Cyaxares, was above Cyrus in power and the greatness of his kingdom.

***temple*** — (<sup>2808</sup>Jeremiah 50:28).

**12.** With all your efforts, your city shall be taken.

***standard*** — to summon the defenders together to any point threatened by the besiegers.

**13. *waters*** — (<sup>2612</sup>Jeremiah 51:32,36; see on <sup>2908</sup>Isaiah 21:1). The Euphrates surrounded the city and, being divided into many channels, formed islands. Compare as to spiritual Babylon “waters,” that is, “many peoples,” (<sup>6708</sup>Revelation 17:1,15. A large lake also was near Babylon.

***measure*** — literally, “cubit,” which was the most common measure, and therefore is used for a *measure* in general. The time for putting a *limit* to thy covetousness [GESENIUS]. There is no “and” in the *Hebrew*: translate, “thine end, the *retribution* for thy covetousness” [GROTIUS]. MAURER takes the image to be from weaving: “the cubit where thou art to be cut off”; for the web is cut off, when the required number of cubits is completed (<sup>2382</sup>Isaiah 38:12).

**14. *by himself*** — literally, “by His soul” (<sup>1052</sup>2 Samuel 15:21 <sup>3083</sup>Hebrews 6:13).

***fill ... with caterpillars*** — locusts (Na 3:15). Numerous as are the citizens of Babylon, the invaders shall be more numerous.

**15-19.** Repeated from <sup>2402</sup>Jeremiah 10:12-16; except that “Israel” is not in the *Hebrew* of <sup>2619</sup>Jeremiah 51:19, which ought, therefore, to be translated, “He is the Former of all things, and (therefore) of the rod of His inheritance” (that is, of the nation peculiarly His own). In the tenth chapter the contrast is between the *idols* and God; here it is between the power of populous *Babylon* and that of God: “*Thou dwellest upon many waters*” (<sup>2613</sup>Jeremiah 51:13); but God can, by merely “uttering His voice,” create “many waters” (<sup>2616</sup>Jeremiah 51:16). The “earth” (in its *material* aspect) is

the result of His “power”; the “world” (viewed in its *orderly system*) is the result of His “wisdom,” etc. (<sup>2615</sup>Jeremiah 51:15). Such an Almighty Being can be at no loss for resources to effect His purpose against Babylon.

**20.** (See on <sup>2613</sup>Jeremiah 50:23). “Break in pieces” refers to the “hammer” there (compare Na 2:1, *Margin*). The *club* also was often used by ancient warriors.

**22. *old and young*** — (<sup>4837</sup>2 Chronicles 36:17).

**24.** The detail of particulars (<sup>2611</sup>Jeremiah 51:20-23) is in order to express the indiscriminate slaughters perpetrated by Babylon on Zion, which, in just retribution, are all to befall her in turn (<sup>2615</sup>Jeremiah 50:15,29).

***in your sight*** — addressed to the Jews.

**25. *destroying mountain*** — called so, not from its position, for it lay low (<sup>2613</sup>Jeremiah 51:13 <sup>4111</sup>Genesis 11:2,9), but from its eminence above other nations, many of which it had “destroyed”; also, because of its lofty palaces, towers, hanging gardens resting on arches, and walls, fifty royal cubits broad and two hundred high.

***roll thee down from the rocks*** — that is, from thy rock-like fortifications and walls.

***burnt mountain*** — (<sup>6688</sup>Revelation 8:8). A volcano, which, after having spent itself in pouring its “destroying” lava on all the country around, falls into the vacuum and becomes extinct, the surrounding “rocks” alone marking where the crater had been. Such was the appearance of Babylon after its destruction, and as the pumice stones of the volcano are left in their place, being unfit for building, so Babylon should never rise from its ruins.

**26. *corner ... stone ... foundations*** — The *corner-stone* was the most important one in the building, the *foundation-stones* came next in importance (<sup>4120</sup>Ephesians 2:20). So the sense is, even as there shall be no stones useful for building left of thee, so no leading *prince*, or *governors*, shall come forth from thy inhabitants.

**27.** (<sup>2619</sup>Jeremiah 50:29). As in <sup>2612</sup>Jeremiah 51:12 the Babylonians were told to “set up the standard,” so here her foes are told to do so: the latter, to good purpose; the former, in vain.

***Ararat*** — Upper or Major Armenia, the regions about Mount Ararat.

***Minni*** — Lower or Lesser Armenia. RAWLINSON says that Van was the capital of Minni. It was conquered by Tettarrassa, the general of Tetembar

II, the Assyrian king whose wars are recorded on the black obelisk now in the British Museum.

**Ashchenaz** — a descendant of Japheth (<sup>411B</sup>Genesis 10:3), who gave his name to the sea now called the Black Sea; the region bordering on it is probably here meant, namely, Asia Minor, including places named Ascania in Phrygia and Bithynia. Cyrus had subdued Asia Minor and the neighboring regions, and from these he drew levies in proceeding against Babylon.

**rough caterpillars** — The horsemen in multitude, and in appearance bristling with javelins and with crests, resemble “rough caterpillars,” or locusts of the hairy-crested kind (Na 3:15).

**28. kings of ... Medes** — (<sup>251B</sup>Jeremiah 51:11). The satraps and tributary kings under Darius, or Cyaxares.

**his dominion** — the king of Media’s dominion.

**land shall tremble ... every purpose of ... Lord shall be performed** — elegant antithesis between the *trembling* of the *land* or earth, and the stability of “every purpose of the Lord” (compare <sup>961</sup>Psalms 46:1-3).

**30. forborne to fight** — for the city was not taken by force of arms, but by stratagem, according to the counsel given to Cyrus by two eunuchs of Belshazzar who deserted.

**remained in ... holds** — not daring to go forth to fight; many, with Nabonidus, withdrew to the fortified city Borsippa.

**31.** (See on <sup>261B</sup>Jeremiah 50:24).

**One post** — *One courier* after another shall announce the capture of the city. The couriers despatched from the walls, where Cyrus enters, shall “meet” those sent by the king. Their confused running to and fro would result from the sudden panic at the entrance of Cyrus into the city, which he had so long besieged ineffectually; the Babylonians had laughed at his attempts and were feasting at the time without fear.

**taken at one end** — which was not known for a long time to the king and his courtiers feasting in the middle of the city; so great was its extent that, when the city was already three days in the enemy’s hands, the fact was not known in some parts of the city [ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, 3.2].

**32. passages are stopped** — The guarded fords of the Euphrates are occupied by the enemy (see on <sup>261B</sup>Jeremiah 50:38).

**reeds ... burned** — literally, “the marsh.” After draining off the river, Cyrus “burned” the stockade of dense tree-like “reeds” on its banks, forming the outworks of the city’s fortifications. The burning of these would give the appearance of the *marsh* or river itself being on “fire.”

**33. like a threshing-floor, it is time to thresh her** — rather, “like a threshing-floor at the time of threshing,” or “at the time when it is trodden.” The *treading*, or *threshing*, here put before the *harvest*, out of the natural order, because the prominent thought is the *treading down* or destruction of Babylon. In the East the treading out of the corn took place only at harvest-time. Babylon is like a threshing-floor not trodden for a long time; but the time of harvest, when her citizens shall be trodden under foot, shall come [CALVIN]. “Like a threshing-floor full of corn, so is Babylon now full of riches, but the time of harvest shall come, when all her prosperity shall be cut off” [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU]. GROTIUS distinguishes the “harvest” from the “threshing”; the former is the slaying of her citizens, the latter the pillaging and destruction of the city (compare <sup><28183></sup>Joel 3:13 <sup><6445></sup>Revelation 14:15,18).

**34. me** — Zion speaks. Her groans are what bring down retribution in kind on Babylon (<sup><28117></sup>Jeremiah 50:17 <sup><64213></sup>Psalm 102:13,17,20).

**empty vessel** — He has drained me out.

**dragon** — The serpent often “swallows” its prey whole; or a sea monster [GROTIUS].

**filled his belly ... cast me out** — like a beast, which, having “filled” himself to satiety, “casts out” the rest [CALVIN]. After filling all his storehouses with my goods, he has *cast me out of this land* [GROTIUS].

**35. my flesh** — which Nebuchadnezzar hath “devoured” (<sup><28134></sup>Jeremiah 51:34). Zion thus calls her *kinsmen* (<sup><61144></sup>Romans 11:14) slain throughout the country or carried captives to Babylon [GROTIUS]. Or, as “my blood” follows, it and “my flesh” constitute the *whole man*: Zion, in its totality, its citizens and all its substance, have been a prey to Babylon’s violence (<sup><49708></sup>Psalm 137:8).

**36. plead ... cause** — (<sup><28184></sup>Jeremiah 50:34).

**sea** — the Euphrates (<sup><28113></sup>Jeremiah 51:13 <sup><28188></sup>Jeremiah 50:38). Compare <sup><28185></sup>Isaiah 19:5, “sea,” that is, the Nile (<sup><29011></sup>Isaiah 21:1).

**37.** (<sup><28185></sup>Jeremiah 50:26,39 <sup><68102></sup>Revelation 18:2).

**38, 39.** The capture of Babylon was effected on the night of a festival in honor of its idols.

**roar ... yell** — The Babylonians were *shouting* in drunken revelry (compare <sup>2789f</sup>Daniel 5:4).

**39. In their heat I will make their feasts** — In the midst of their being heated with wine, I will give them “their” potions, — a very different cup to drink, but one which is *their due*, the wine cup of My stupefying wrath (<sup>2555</sup>Jeremiah 25:15 <sup>49:12</sup> <sup>2517f</sup>Isaiah 51:17 <sup>2502f</sup>Lamentations 4:21).

**rejoice, and sleep ... perpetual**, etc. — that they may *exult*, and in the midst of their jubilant exultation sleep the sleep of death (<sup>2515f</sup>Jeremiah 51:57 <sup>2304f</sup>Isaiah 21:4,5).

**41. Sheshach** — Babylon (compare *Note*, see <sup>2235f</sup>Jeremiah 25:26); called so from the goddess Shach, to whom a five days’ festival was kept, during which, as in the Roman Saturnalia, the most unbridled licentiousness was permitted; slaves ruled their masters, and in every house one called Zogan, arrayed in a royal garment, was chosen to rule all the rest. He calls Babylon “Sheshach,” to imply that it was during this feast the city was taken [SCALIGER].

**42. The sea** — the host of Median invaders. The image (compare <sup>2470f</sup>Jeremiah 47:2 <sup>2387f</sup>Isaiah 8:7,8) is appropriately taken from the Euphrates, which, overflowing in spring, is like a “sea” near Babylon (<sup>2513f</sup>Jeremiah 51:13,32,36).

**43. Her cities** — the cities, her dependencies. So, “Jerusalem and the cities thereof” (<sup>2340f</sup>Jeremiah 34:1). Or, the “cities” are the inner and outer cities, the two parts into which Babylon was divided by the Euphrates [GROTIVS].

**44. Bel ... swallowed** — in allusion to the many sacrifices to the idol which its priests pretended it swallowed at night; or rather, the precious gifts taken from other nations and offered to it (which it is said to have “swallowed”; compare “devoured,” “swallowed,” <sup>2534f</sup>Jeremiah 51:34 <sup>2507f</sup>Jeremiah 50:17), which it should have to disgorge (compare <sup>2513f</sup>Jeremiah 51:13 <sup>2515f</sup>Jeremiah 50:37). Of these gifts were the vessels of Jehovah’s temple in Jerusalem (<sup>4307f</sup>2 Chronicles 36:7 <sup>2700f</sup>Daniel 1:2). The restoration of these, as foretold here, is recorded in <sup>4500f</sup>Ezra 1:7-11.

**flow** — as a river; fitly depicting the *influx* of pilgrims of all “nations” to the idol.

**45, 46.** (See on <sup>2516f</sup>Jeremiah 51:6).

**46. *And lest*** — Compare, for the same ellipsis, <sup><082></sup>Genesis 3:22 <sup><037></sup>Exodus 13:17 <sup><082></sup>Deuteronomy 8:12. “And in order that your heart may not faint at the (first) rumor” (of war), I will give you some intimation of the time. In the first “year” there shall “come a rumor” that Cyrus is preparing for war against Babylon. “After that, in another year, shall come a rumor,” namely, that Cyrus is approaching, and has already entered Assyria. Then is your time to “go out” (<sup><515></sup>Jeremiah 51:45). Babylon was taken the following or third year of Belshazzar’s reign [GROTIUS].

***violence in the land*** — of Babylon (<sup><376></sup>Psalm 7:16).

***ruler against ruler*** — or, “ruler upon ruler,” a continual change of rulers in a short space. Belshazzar and Nabonidus, supplanted by Darius or Cyaxares, who is succeeded by Cyrus.

**47.** GROTIUS translates, “Because then (namely, on the third year) the time shall have come that,” etc.

***confounded*** — at seeing their gods powerless to help them.

***her slain*** — in retribution for “*Israel’s* slain” (<sup><514></sup>Jeremiah 51:49) who fell by her hand. GROTIUS translates, “her dancers,” as in <sup><2121></sup>Judges 21:21,23 <sup><0816></sup>1 Samuel 18:6, the same *Hebrew* word is translated, alluding to the dancing revelry of the festival during which Cyrus took Babylon.

**48. *heaven ... earth ... sing for Babylon*** — (<sup><247></sup>Isaiah 14:7-13 44:23 <sup><0820></sup>Revelation 18:20).

**49. *caused ... to fall*** — literally, “has been for the falling,” that is, as Babylon made this its one aim to fill all places with the slain of Israel, so at Babylon shall all the slain *of that whole land* (not as *English Version*, “of all the *earth*”) [MAURER]. HENDERSON translates, “Babylon also shall fall, ye slain of Israel. Those also of Babylon shall fall, O ye slain of all the earth.” But, “in the midst of her,” <sup><517></sup>Jeremiah 51:47, plainly answers to “at Babylon,” <sup><514></sup>Jeremiah 51:49, *English Version*.

**50. *escaped ... sword*** — namely, of the Medes. So great will be the slaughter that even some of God’s people shall be involved in it, as they had deserved.

***afar off*** — though ye are banished far off from where ye used formerly to worship God.

***let Jerusalem come into your mind*** — While in exile remember your temple and city, so as to prefer them to all the rest of the world wherever ye may be (<sup><206></sup>Isaiah 62:6).

**51.** The prophet anticipates the Jews' reply; I know you will say in despair, "We are confounded," etc. "Wherefore (God saith to you) behold, I will," etc. (<sup>26152</sup>Jeremiah 51:52) [CALVIN]. I prefer taking (<sup>26151</sup>Jeremiah 51:51) as the *prayer* which the Jews are directed to offer in exile (<sup>26150</sup>Jeremiah 51:50), "let Jerusalem come into your mind" (and say in prayer to God), "We are confounded." This view is confirmed by <sup>39445</sup>Psalms 44:15, 16 79:4 102:17-20 <sup>23016</sup>Isaiah 62:6,7.

*for strangers* — The "reproach," which especially has stung us, came when they taunted us with the fact that they had burned the temple, our peculiar glory, as though our religion was a thing of naught.

**52. Wherefore** — because of these sighs of the Jews directed to God (<sup>26121</sup>Jeremiah 51:21).

*I ... judgment upon ... images* — in opposition to the Babylonian taunt that Jehovah's religion was a thing of naught, since they had burned His temple (<sup>26151</sup>Jeremiah 51:51): I will show that, though I have thus visited the Jews neglect of Me, yet those gods of Babylon cannot save themselves, much less their votaries, who shall "through all her land" lie and "groan" with wounds.

**53.** We are not to measure God's power by what seems to our perceptions natural or probable. Compare <sup>31004</sup>Obadiah 1:4 as to Edom (<sup>31012</sup>Amos 9:2).

**55. great voice** — Where once was the *great din* of a mighty city. there shall be the silence of death [VATABLUS]. Or, the "great voice" of the revellers (<sup>26138</sup>Jeremiah 51:38,39 <sup>23212</sup>Isaiah 22:2). Or, the voice of *mighty boasting* [CALVIN], (compare <sup>26153</sup>Jeremiah 51:53).

*her waves* — "when" her calamities shall cause her to give forth a widely different "voice," even such a one as the waves give that lash the shores (<sup>26142</sup>Jeremiah 51:42) [GROTIUS]. Or, "when" is connected thus: "the great voice" in her, when her "waves," etc. (compare <sup>26113</sup>Jeremiah 51:13). CALVIN translates, "*their waves*," that is, the Medes bursting on her as impetuous waves; so <sup>26142</sup>Jeremiah 51:42. But the parallel, "a great voice," belongs to *her*, therefore the wave-like "roar" of "their voice" ought also belong to *her* (compare <sup>26154</sup>Jeremiah 51:54). The "great voice" of commercial din, boasting, and feasting, is "destroyed"; but in its stead there is the wave-like roar of *her voice* in her "destruction" (<sup>26154</sup>Jeremiah 51:54).

**56. taken** — when they were least expecting it, and in such a way that resistance was impossible.

**57.** (<sup>26139</sup>Jeremiah 51:39 <sup>27101</sup>Daniel 5:1, etc.).



**58. *broad walls*** — eighty-seven feet broad [ROSENMULLER]; fifty cubits [GROTIUS]. A chariot of four horses abreast could meet another on it without collision. The walls were two hundred cubits high, and four hundred and eighty-five stadia, or sixty miles in extent.

***gates*** — one hundred in number, of brass; twenty-five on each of the four sides, the city being square; between the gates were two hundred and fifty towers. BEROSUS says triple walls encompassed the outer, and the same number the inner city. Cyrus caused the outer walls to be demolished. Taking the extent of the walls to be three hundred and sixty-five stadia, as DIODORUS states, it is said two hundred thousand men completed a stadium each day, so that the whole was completed in one year.

***labor ... in the fire*** — The event will show that the builders of the walls have “labored” only for the “fire” in which they shall be consumed, “In the fire” answers to the parallel, “burned with fire.” Translate, “*shall have labored in vain,*” etc. Compare <sup><3084></sup>Job 3:14, “built desolate places for themselves,” that is, grand places, soon about to be desolate ruins. Jeremiah has in view here <sup><3113></sup>Habakkuk 2:13.

**59-64.** A special copy of the prophecy prepared by Jeremiah was delivered to Seraiah, to console the Jews in their Babylonian exile. Though he was to throw it into the Euphrates, a symbol of Babylon’s fate, no doubt he retained the substance in memory, so as to be able orally to communicate it to his countrymen.

***went with Zedekiah*** — rather, “in behalf of Zedekiah”; sent by Zedekiah to appease Nebuchadnezzar’s anger at his revolt [CALVIN].

***fourth year*** — so that Jeremiah’s prediction of Babylon’s downfall was thus solemnly written and sealed by a symbolical action, six whole years before the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

***quiet prince*** — Compare <sup><3209></sup>1 Chronicles 22:9, “a man of rest.” Seraiah was not one of the courtiers hostile to God’s prophets, but “quiet” and docile; ready to execute Jeremiah’s commission, notwithstanding the risk attending it. GLASSIUS translates, “prince of Menuchah” (compare <sup><3152></sup>1 Chronicles 2:52, *Margin*). MAURER translates, “commander of the caravan,” on whom it devolved to appoint the resting-place for the night. *English Version* suits the context best.

**61. *read*** — not in public, for the Chaldeans would not have understood *Hebrew*; but in private, as is to be inferred from his addressing himself altogether to God (<sup><2503></sup>Jeremiah 51:62) [CALVIN].



**62. *O Lord, thou*** — and not merely Jeremiah or any man is the author of this prophecy; I therefore here in Thy presence embrace as true all that I read.

**63. *bind a stone***, etc. — (<sup><66821></sup>Revelation 18:21). So the Phoceans in leaving their country, when about to found Marseilles, threw lead into the sea, binding themselves not to return till the lead should swim.

**64. *they shall be weary*** — The Babylonians shall be worn out, so as not to be able to recover their strength.

***Thus far ... Jeremiah*** — Hence it is to be inferred that the last chapter is not included in Jeremiah's writings but was added by some inspired man, mainly at <sup><1248></sup>2 Kings 24:18-25:30 to explain and confirm what precedes [CALVIN].

# CHAPTER 52

## JEREMIAH 52:1-34.

### WRITTEN BY SOME OTHER THAN JEREMIAH (PROBABLY EZRA) AS AN HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE PREVIOUS PROPHECIES

(See on <sup><2510></sup>Jeremiah 51:64). Jeremiah, having already (thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters) given the history in the proper place, was not likely to repeat it here. Its canonical authority as inspired is shown by its being in the *Septuagint version*. It contains the capture and burning of Jerusalem, etc., Zedekiah's punishment, and the better treatment of Jehoiachin under Evil-merodach, down to his death. These last events were probably subsequent to Jeremiah's time.

**3. *through ... anger of ... Lord ... Zedekiah rebelled*** — His “anger” against Jerusalem, determining Him to “cast out” His people “from His presence” heretofore manifested there, led Him to permit Zedekiah to rebel (<sup><1239></sup>2 Kings 23:26,27; compare <sup><1199></sup>Exodus 9:12 10:1 <sup><698></sup>Romans 9:18). That rebellion, being in violation of his oath “by God,” was sure to bring down God's vengeance (<sup><1433></sup>2 Chronicles 36:13 <sup><2475></sup>Ezekiel 17:15,16,18).

**4. *forts*** — rather, *towers* of wood [KIMCHI], for watching the movements of the besieged from the height and annoying them with missiles.

**7.** (See on <sup><2894></sup>Jeremiah 39:4).

**9. *gave judgment upon him*** — as guilty of rebellion and perjury (<sup><2513></sup>Jeremiah 52:3; compare <sup><2324></sup>Ezekiel 23:24).

**11.** <sup><2123></sup>Ezekiel 12:13: “I will bring him to Babylon ... yet shall he not *see it*.”

***prison*** — literally, “the house of visitations,” or “punishments,” that is, where there was penal work enforced on the prisoners, such as grinding. Hence the *Septuagint* renders it “the house of the mill.” So Samson, after his eyes were put out, “ground” in the Philistine prison-house (<sup><4762></sup>Judges 16:21).

**12. *tenth day*** — But in <sup><1218></sup>2 Kings 25:8, it is said “the *seventh day*.” Nebuzara-dan *started* from Riblah on the “seventh” day and *arrived* in

Jerusalem on the “tenth” day. Seeming discrepancies, when cleared up, confirm the genuineness of Scripture; for they show there was no collusion between the writers; as in all God’s works there is latent harmony under outward varieties.

**13. *all the houses ... and all the houses of the great*** — the “and” defines what houses especially are meant, namely, the houses of the great men.

**15. *poor of ... people*** — added to the account in <sup><12511></sup>2 Kings 25:11. “The poor of the people” are *of the city*, as distinguished from “the poor of the land,” that is, *of the country*.

**17. *brake*** — that they might be more portable. Fulfilling the prophecy (<sup><32719></sup>Jeremiah 27:19). See <sup><11075></sup>1 Kings 7:15,23,27,50. Nothing is so particularly related here as the carrying away of the articles in the temple. The remembrance of their beauty and preciousness heightens the bitterness of their loss and the evil of sin which caused it.

***brass ... brazen*** — rather “copper ... of copper.”

**18.** (<sup><12278></sup>Exodus 27:3).

**19. *of gold in gold*** — implying that the articles were of solid gold and silver respectively, not of a different metal inside, or alloyed [GROTIUS]. *Whole*: not breaking them as was done to the “brass” (<sup><3627></sup>Jeremiah 52:17).

**20. *bulls ... under the bases*** — But the bulls were not “*under the bases*,” but under the *sea* (<sup><11025></sup>1 Kings 7:25,27,38); the ten bases were not under the sea, but under the ten lavers. In *English Version*, “bases,” therefore, must mean the *lower parts of the sea* under which the bulls were. Rather, translate, “the bulls were *in the place of* (that is, ‘by way of’; so the *Hebrew*, <sup><0949></sup>1 Samuel 14:9), bases,” or supports to the sea [BUXTORF]. So the *Septuagint*. <sup><12516></sup>2 Kings 25:16 omits the “bulls,” and has “*and the bases*”; so GROTIUS here reads “the bulls (which were) under (the sea) *and the bases*.”

**21. *eighteen cubits*** — but in <sup><1485></sup>2 Chronicles 3:15, it is “thirty-five cubits.” The discrepancy is thus removed. *Each* pillar was eighteen common cubits. The two together, deducting the base, were thirty-five, as stated in <sup><1485></sup>2 Chronicles 3:15 [GROTIUS]. Other ways (for example, by reference to the difference between the common and the sacred cubit) are proposed: though we are not able positively to decide now which is the true way, at least those proposed do show that *the discrepancies are not irreconcilable*.

**22. *five cubits*** — so <sup><11716></sup>1 Kings 7:16. But <sup><12517></sup>2 Kings 25:17 has “three cubits.” There were two parts in the chapter: the one lower and plain, of

two cubits; the other, higher and curiously carved, of three cubits. The former is omitted in <sup><12517></sup>2 Kings 25:17, as belonging to the shaft of the pillar; the latter alone is there mentioned. Here the *whole* chapter of five cubits is referred to.

**23. on a side** — literally, (on the side) *towards the air* or *wind*, that is, the outside of the capitals of the pillars conspicuous to the eye, opposed to the four remaining pomegranates which were not seen from the outside. The pomegranates here are ninety-six; but in <sup><11073></sup>1 Kings 7:20 they are two hundred on each chapter, and four hundred on the two (<sup><34013></sup>2 Chronicles 4:13). It seems there were *two* rows of them, one above the other, and in each row a hundred. They are here said to be ninety-six, but immediately following one hundred, and so in <sup><11073></sup>1 Kings 7:20. *Four* seem to have been unseen to one looking from one point; and the ninety-six are only those that could be seen [VATABLUS]; or, the *four* omitted here are those separating the four sides, one pomegranate at each point of separation (or at the four corners) between the four sides [GROTIUS].

**24. Seraiah** — different from the Seraiah (<sup><26159></sup>Jeremiah 51:59), son of Neriah; probably son of Azariah (<sup><131644></sup>1 Chronicles 6:14).

**Zephaniah** — son of Maaseiah (see on <sup><22010></sup>Jeremiah 21:1; <sup><29225></sup>Jeremiah 29:25).

**25. seven men** — but in <sup><12519></sup>2 Kings 25:19 it is “*five*.” Perhaps two were less illustrious persons and are therefore omitted.

**principal scribe of the host** — (<sup><23318></sup>Isaiah 33:18). His office was to preside over the levy and enroll recruits. RAWLINSON observes that the Assyrian records are free from the exaggerated expressions found in the Egyptian. A minute account was taken of the spoil. Two “scribes of the host” are seen in every bas-relief, writing down the various objects brought to them: the heads of the slain, the prisoners, cattle, sheep, etc.

**28. seventh year** — in <sup><12412></sup>2 Kings 24:12,14,16, it is said “the *eighth year*” of Nebuchadnezzar. No doubt it was in part about the end of the seventh year, in part about the beginning of the eighth. Also in <sup><12412></sup>2 Kings 24:1-20, ten thousand (<sup><26244></sup>Jeremiah 52:14), and seven thousand men of might, and a thousand craftsmen (<sup><26216></sup>Jeremiah 52:16), are said to have been carried away, But here three thousand twenty-three. Probably the latter three thousand twenty-three were of the tribe of Judah, the remaining seven thousand out of the ten thousand were of the other tribes, out of which many Israelites still had been left in the land. The a thousand “craftsmen” were exclusive of the ten thousand, as appears, by comparing <sup><12414></sup>2 Kings 24:14 with <sup><26216></sup>Jeremiah 52:16. Probably the three thousand twenty-three of

Judah were first removed in the end of “the seventh year”; the seven thousand and a thousand craftsmen in the “eighth year.” This was at the first captivity under Jehoiachin.

**29. *eighteenth year*** — when Jerusalem was taken. But in <sup><3625></sup>Jeremiah 52:15, and <sup><12318></sup>2 Kings 25:8, “the nineteenth year.” Probably it was at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth [LYRA].

***eight hundred and thirty and two*** — The most illustrious persons are meant, who no doubt were carried away first, at the end of the eighteenth year.

**30.** Not recorded in Kings or Chronicles. Probably it took place during the commotions that followed the death of Gedaliah (<sup><3418></sup>Jeremiah 41:18 <sup><12319></sup>2 Kings 25:26).

***four thousand and six hundred*** — The exact sum-total of the numbers specified here, namely, three thousand twenty-three, eight hundred thirty-two, seven hundred forty-five, not including the general multitude and the women and children (<sup><3625></sup>Jeremiah 52:15 <sup><3449></sup>Jeremiah 39:9 <sup><12519></sup>2 Kings 25:11).

**31.** (<sup><1257></sup>2 Kings 25:27-30).

***five and twentieth day*** — but in <sup><1257></sup>2 Kings 25:27, it is “the twenty-seventh day.” Probably on the twenty-fifth the decree for his elevation was given, and the preparations for it made by releasing him from prison; and on the twenty-seventh day it was carried into effect.

***Evil-merodach*** — son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar [LYRA]; and the *Hebrew* writers say that during Nebuchadnezzar’s exclusion from men among beasts, Evil-merodach administered the government. When Nebuchadnezzar at the end of seven years was restored, hearing of his son’s misconduct and that he had exulted in his father’s calamity, he threw him into prison, where the latter met Jeconiah and contracted a friendship with him, whence arose the favor which subsequently he showed him. God, in his elevation, rewarded his having surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar (compare <sup><3687></sup>Jeremiah 38:17 with <sup><1242></sup>2 Kings 24:12).

***lifted up ... head*** — (Compare <sup><1413></sup>Genesis 40:13,20 <sup><4188></sup>Psalms 3:3 27:6).

**32. *set his throne above*** — a mark of respect.

***the kings*** — The *Hebrew* text reads (the other) kings.” “The kings” is a Masoretic correction.

**33. *changed ... garments*** — gave him garments suitable to a king.

*did ... eat bread before him* — (<sup><1093></sup>2 Samuel 9:13).

**34.** *every day a portion* — rather, “*its* portion,” (compare <sup><1059></sup>1 Kings 8:59, *Margin*).