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COMMENTARY

Barnes' Notes on the Bible
Volume 8 -
Jeremiah
By A. Fuller

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JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

1. JEREMIAH was by birth a priest, and dwelt at Anathoth, a village in the tribe of Benjamin, about three miles north of Jerusalem. The name is not found until the time of David, when, however, it seems to have become common (see ~~<12218>~~1 Chronicles 12:4,10,13), and most probably it signifies that Yahweh shall exalt.

It is a subject of dispute whether or not Hilkiyah, the father of Jeremiah, was the high priest of that name, who found the Book of the Law in the Temple (~~<12218>~~2 Kings 22:8). It is at least possible that he was. The more than ordinary respect felt for the prophet by Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and other reasons support the supposition that Jeremiah was a man of high birth.

His call to the prophetic office came in the 13th year of Josiah. It was a time when danger was once again gathering around the little kingdom of Judah, and to Jeremiah was assigned a more directly political position than to any other of “the goodly fellowship of the prophets;” as both the symbols shown to him and the very words of his institution prove. If we glance back at the previous history, we find that the destruction of Sennacherib’s army in the 14th year of Hezekiah (693 B.C.), though it had not freed the land from predatory incursions, had nevertheless put an end to all serious designs on the part of the Assyrians to reduce it to the same condition as that to which Salmaneser had reduced Samaria. The danger of Judaea really rose from Egypt on the one hand and Babylon on the other. In Egypt Psammetichus put an end to the subdivision of the country, and made himself sole master in the 17th year of Assurbanipal (649 B.C.), being the 24th of Manasseh. Since he reigned for 54 years, he was — during the last 18 or 19 years of his life — contemporary with Josiah, but it was his successor Necho who killed Josiah at Megiddo. Meanwhile, as Egypt grew in strength, so Nineveh declined, partly from the effects of the Scythian invasion, but still more from the growing power of the Medes, and from Babylon having achieved its independence. Two years after the battle of Megiddo, Nineveh fell before a combined attack of the Medes under Cyaxares and the Babylonians under Nabopalassar. But

Nabopalassar does not seem to have been otherwise a warlike king, and Egypt remained the dominant power until the fourth year of Jehoiakim. In that year, 586 B.C., according to the cylinders, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho at Carchemish. Having peaceably succeeded his father, he returned to Judaea, and Jehoiakim became his vassal. After three years of servitude Jehoiakim rebelled (^{2420E}2 Kings 24:1), and died. Three months afterward, his son Jehoiachin, the queen-mother, and a large number of nobles and artificers, were carried captive to Babylon.

The growth of Egypt into a first-rate power under Psammetichus (^{2428B}Jeremiah 2:18,36), raised the question of a close alliance with him. The youthful Jeremiah gave his voice against it. Josiah recognized that voice as inspired, and obeyed. His obedience cost him his life at Megiddo; but four years later Necho was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. On that day, the fate of the Jewish nation was decided, and the primary object of Jeremiah's mission then ceased.

The ministry of Jeremiah really belonged to the last 18 years of Josiah's reign. Judah's probation was then going on, her salvation still possible; though each year Judah's guilt became heavier, her condemnation became more certain. But to the eye of man, her punishment seemed more remote than ever. Jehoiakim was the willing vassal of Egypt, the supreme power. No wonder that, being an irreligious man, he scorned all of Jeremiah's predictions of utter and early ruin. It is no wonder that he destroyed Jeremiah's scroll, as merely the record of the outpourings of mere fanaticism. It was his last chance, his last offer of mercy: and as he threw the torn fragments of the scroll onto the fire, he symbolically threw there his royal house, his doomed city, the Temple, and all the people of the land. It was in this fourth year of Jehoiakim that Jeremiah boldly foretold the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, and the wide limits over which it would extend. This prophecy (Jeremiah 25) placed his life in danger, so that "the Lord hid" him and Baruch (^{2436B}Jeremiah 36:26). When Jeremiah appears again, Nebuchadnezzar was advancing upon Jerusalem to execute the prophecy contained in ^{2437D}Jeremiah 36:30,31. And with the death of Jehoiakim, the first period of Judah's history was brought to a close. Though Jeremiah remained with Zedekiah, and tried to influence him for good, yet Jeremiah's mission was over. Jeremiah himself testifies that the Jewish Church had gone with Jehoiachin to Babylon. Zedekiah and those who remained in Jerusalem were only the refuse of a fruit-basket from which everything good had been culled (Jeremiah 24), and their destruction

was only a matter of course. Jeremiah held no distinctive office toward them. Such was the political state of things in the evil days in which Jeremiah was commissioned to make Yahweh's last appeal to His covenant-people. However, to understand the prophet's position fully, the moral change which had come over the Jews, and which was the real cause of the nation's ruin, must be noted.

Up to the time of Manasseh, though there had been bad as well as good kings, and though there had probably always been a certain amount of nature-worship and of unauthorized rites upon the hill-tops, yet the service of Yahweh had been the sole established and even dominant religion of the people. But upon Manasseh's accession a new order of things began; and, in spite of his repentance, it continued throughout his long reign of 55 years. Not only was there the open establishment of idolatry, but a reign of terror commenced, during which not only the prophets, but all who were distinguished for religion and virtue, were cruelly murdered. The reign of Manasseh was important in another particular. During it the land was slowly recovering from its utterly exhausted state at the end of the Assyrian wars; and when Josiah came to the throne, there was both great prosperity among the people, and also a better state of feeling. Great and good men stood forward as leaders in defense of their national religion and covenant-God. And the nation itself had become as dissatisfied with Baal and Moloch as their forefathers had been with Yahweh. In his 18th year Josiah entered with all his heart into the work of restoring the national religion, and labored with a stern earnestness to remove every vestige of idol-worship from the land. This was half the work; the other half was entrusted to Jeremiah. The king could cleanse the land; the word of God alone, speaking to their consciences, could cleanse men's hearts. Therefore, the office of Jeremiah was to show that a change of morals must accompany the public reformation effected by Josiah, or it would not be accepted. (Compare ²⁰¹⁸Jeremiah 4:3; 5:1; 7:9-11; 9:4,5.)

It was in Josiah's 13th year, when entire quiet prevailed in the political world, and Jeremiah was himself little more than 20 years of age, that his appointment took place, and two symbols were shown to him by which he learned the main reasons why the word of Yahweh was entrusted to his charge. By the first, the branch of an almond-tree, he was taught that judgment was awake in the land. Judah must decide at once whether she will serve Yahweh or Baalim, and her choice must be REAL. If she chooses Yahweh, she must prove that such is her choice by worshipping

Him in purity and holiness. For, secondly, by the symbol of the seething caldron, he learned that a dreadful calamity was impending over his country.

There are in Jewish history two overwhelming catastrophes: The first being the destruction of the holy city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar. And the second was the destruction of the holy city and temple by Titus. The preaching of Jeremiah caused the first to be a new birth to the chosen people. The preaching of Christ caused the Christian Church to spring forth from the other. But if their preaching had been more generally listened to, Jerusalem might have been saved each time. It was because people passed on without heeding the warning that the nation thus fell twice (^{<219D>}Luke 19:42). As in each case, only a small minority was saved in the general ruin, the office both of Jeremiah and of our Lord is described by the same metaphor. In ^{<241Z>}Jeremiah 6:27-30 the prophet compares himself to a smelter, who uses all the resources of his art to extract from the ore the precious silver, but in vain. In similar terms, Malachi compares our Lord to a refiner and purifier of silver (^{<31RD>}Malachi 3:2,3; 4:1). The Jews understood that Jeremiah was a type of the Messiah, and surrounded his remembrance with many mythical legends (2 Macc. 2:1-8; 15:13-16); and when they asked John, “Art thou that prophet?” (^{<411Z>}John 1:21) there can be little doubt that it was Jeremiah whom they were expecting to appear again. Many Jewish and some Christian expositors see in Jeremiah the “servant of Yahweh,” whose sorrows are so graphically set forth in Isaiah 53.

Jeremiah was not, however, one “dumb before the shearers, and that opened not his mouth” (^{<251D>}Isaiah 53:7). Of all the prophets there is not one who so frankly lays open to us his brooding melancholy nature. He discloses to us his innermost thoughts. We find him sensitive to a most painful degree, timid, shy, hopeless, desponding, constantly complaining, and dissatisfied with the course of events, with the office which had been thrust upon him, and with the manner of the Divine Providence. For example, He accuses God of injustice because all Jeremiah’s efforts seem to be without result. Bad men prospered (^{<241D>}Jeremiah 12:1); false prophets resisted those who had the divine commission (^{<244B>}Jeremiah 14:13). No miracle was performed by him or for him. No prediction was suddenly verified in a startling way. No demonstration of power was granted to him in common with the prophets of old, and therefore “the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto him, and a derision daily” (^{<241D>}Jeremiah 20:7).

His one task was to foretell the downfall of his country because of its persistence in sin. And his reward was to be a man of strife and of contention to the whole earth: everyone “doth curse me” (²⁴⁵¹⁰Jeremiah 15:10; compare ²⁴⁰¹⁷Jeremiah 20:7). And, for this apparent failure, he was not prepared. He contrasts the joy with which he had entered upon his office with the disappointment of his hopes (²⁴⁵¹⁵Jeremiah 15:15-18, 17:16); and when put in the stocks (²⁴⁰¹⁷Jeremiah 20:2), he even accuses God of deceiving him, and determines to abandon his office (²⁴⁰¹⁷Jeremiah 20:7-18.) Jeremiah was not one whose sanguine temperament made him see the bright side of things, nor did he quickly find peace and happiness in doing his Master’s will. And yet we never find him rebuked, because he was doing his duty to the utmost extent of his powers. Timid in resolve he was unflinching in execution. As fearless when he had to face the whole world as he was dispirited and prone to complaining when alone with God. He is a noble example of the triumph of the moral over the physical nature. His whole strength lay in his determination to do what was right at whatever cost. He made everything yield to whatever his conscience told him he ought to do. Danger, opposition, mockery without; fear, despondency, disappointment within, availed nothing to shake his constant mind. The sense of duty prevailed over every other consideration; and in no saint were the words of Paul (⁴⁷¹¹⁹2 Corinthians 12:9) better exemplified.

Many of the same characteristics may be seen in Jeremiah’s style of writing. He did not possess those gifts which make the orator.

Jeremiah has the unusual habit of repeating himself; compare:

- ²⁴⁰²⁸**Jeremiah 2:28** — repeated in ²⁴¹¹³Jeremiah 11:13
- ²⁴¹⁸⁹**Jeremiah 5:9,29** — repeated in ²⁴³⁰⁰Jeremiah 9:9
- ²⁴¹⁶³**Jeremiah 6:13-15** — repeated in ²⁴³⁸⁰Jeremiah 8:10-12
- ²⁴⁰⁷⁴**Jeremiah 7:14** — repeated in ²⁴²⁰⁶Jeremiah 26:6
- ²⁴¹¹¹**Jeremiah 11:20** — repeated in ²⁴⁰¹²Jeremiah 20:12
- ²⁴¹⁵²**Jeremiah 15:2** — repeated in ²⁴³¹¹Jeremiah 43:11
- ²⁴¹⁶⁴**Jeremiah 16:14,15** — repeated in ²⁴²³⁷Jeremiah 23:7,8
- ²⁴¹⁷⁵**Jeremiah 17:25** — repeated in ²⁴²⁰⁴Jeremiah 22:4
- ²⁴²³⁹**Jeremiah 23:19,20** — repeated in ²⁴³²³Jeremiah 30:23,24
- ²⁴³¹¹**Jeremiah 30:11** — repeated in ²⁴⁴⁵⁸Jeremiah 46:28
- ²⁴³³⁵**Jeremiah 31:35,36** — repeated in ²⁴³³⁵Jeremiah 33:25,26

He did not have any of that strength and vigor, nor of that warmth of imagination, which characterize Isaiah and Micah. His usual method is to

set his main thought before the mind in a succession of images. They seldom grow out of one another, but simply form a succession of illustrations, each of which is full of poetry, but with this remarkable peculiarity, that Jeremiah never uses his picture as such, but mixes up with it words which are appropriate, not to the metaphor, but to the idea which he is illustrating (e.g., ^{<24115>}Jeremiah 1:15; 6:3-5). His simile is constantly dismissed almost before it has been fully presented to the mind in order that he may declare his meaning in plain and unvarnished prose. This fullness of illustration, often diffuse and inconsecutive, is exactly in harmony with Jeremiah's subject. No lot could have been more dreary to a man of intense patriotism like Jeremiah than to see the ruin of his country steadily approaching, to mark each step of its advance, to have to point out its causes, and to know the sole remedy, but also to know that none would heed his words. Could he have only witnessed the return of the exiles, and have known that the restoration of the Jewish Church was, humanly speaking, HIS work, his despondency would have given way to joy. But no such comfort was vouchsafed him. He was required to give up all the innocent joys of life (^{<24157>}Jeremiah 15:17); to abandon the most cherished privilege of a Jew, and live unmarried (^{<24162>}Jeremiah 16:2); and to abstain even from the civilities and sympathies of society (^{<24165>}Jeremiah 16:5); only to be an object of universal abhorrence. This was Jeremiah's calling; not to be a poet or orator, but to PERSUADE people by the force of his moral character, and to conquer by suffering.

And his style is in keeping with the man. He spoke as he thought. Ever brooding over his message to his people it presented itself to his mind in many aspects, but was in substance ever the same. We have no change of subjects in his prophecy. He has only the single cry of Woe! All he can do is to adapt his unvarying tale to the existing state of things, and to present it under new images. He is a true poet, but the poet of sorrow. Though sorrow comes only occasionally, yet it comes to all, and then Jeremiah, the prophet of suffering, is full of instruction for us. Perhaps no book of Holy Scripture sets so plainly before people the great issues which depend upon right and wrong.

2. There can be little doubt that the Book of Jeremiah grew out of the scroll which Baruch wrote down at the prophet's mouth in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and which was completed and read before the king in his fifth year, in the ninth month (Jeremiah 36). This scroll contained a record of "all that God had spoken unto Jeremiah against Israel and against Judah

and against all the nations” during the 23 years which had elapsed since the prophet’s call (Jeremiah 36:2). However, since Jeremiah 21 was written during the reign of Zedekiah, Jeremiah 19, along with (perhaps) Jeremiah 20 written as a sort of appendix, is the last chapter which can have formed part of that collection. Apparently, therefore, we have at most only fragments of Jehoiakim’s roll, the largest of which consists of Jeremiah 2—10. Probably also the prophecies against the Gentiles in Jeremiah 46—49 were contained in the scroll, but were placed in their present position in order to connect them with the prophecies against Babylon (Jeremiah 50—51) written in Zedekiah’s fourth year. So, also excepting Jeremiah 13, we must include in the scroll the short prophecies which precede that of “the potter’s vessel” (Jeremiah 19). From Jeremiah 20 all signs of any general arrangement vanish. Attempts indeed have been made to show that these later chapters are grouped together upon some sort of system, but they are far-fetched and unsatisfactory.

Therefore, the conclusion forced upon the mind is that Jeremiah had proposed to himself to gather into one volume all his prophecies, and that this is the reason why Jehoiakim’s scroll has not come down to us as a whole, but that he died in Egypt before he had been able to accomplish his design, and that, at his death, whoever had charge of his writings (probably Baruch) did not feel himself at liberty to attempt any arrangement of them. Jeremiah 52 was added to complete the history, and, since it contains a notice of events more than 20 years after Jeremiah’s death, it is probable, that, long before this time, his prophecies had become current in their present disorder. The superscription of the Book of Jeremiah confirms the foregoing statements in a remarkable manner, because it bears upon its surface plain marks of repeated alterations.

The text of the Septuagint Version offers very considerable differences from that of the Masorites, contained in our Hebrew Bibles. From first to last there are innumerable variations, which sometimes affect only single letters, syllables or words, but sometimes whole verses. On the other hand the omissions are unimportant, and we nowhere find in either text anything altogether independent of the other. There is however a remarkable dislocation of the whole series of the prophecies against the nations: and not only do they hold a different place generally, but are arranged on a different plan among themselves.

As the dislocation thus begins at ^{<2515>}Jeremiah 25:15, it follows that ^{<2515>}Jeremiah 25:15—45 become in the Septuagint Jeremiah 32—51, while the appendix, Jeremiah 52, holds the last place in both texts. The order of the nations in the Septuagint is Elam, Egypt, Babylon, the Philistines, Edom, Ammon, Kedar, Damascus, and Moab. Compare the following table:

HEBREW — SEPTUAGINT

Jeremiah 46 — Egypt — **Jeremiah 26**

Jeremiah 47 — Philistines — ^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 29:1-7**

Jeremiah 48 — Moab — **Jeremiah 31**

^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 49:1-6** — Ammon — ^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 30:1-5**

^{<2407>}**Jeremiah 49:7-22** — Edom — ^{<2407>}**Jeremiah 29:7-22**

^{<2402>}**Jeremiah 49:23-27** — Damascus — ^{<2402>}**Jeremiah 30:12-16**

^{<2402>}**Jeremiah 49:28-33** — Kedar & Hazor — ^{<2406>}**Jeremiah 30:6-11**

^{<2408>}**Jeremiah 49:34-39** — Elam — ^{<2415>}**Jeremiah 25:15-20**

Jeremiah 50—51 — Babylon — **Jeremiah 27—28**

The earlier position of the Gentile prophecies in the Septuagint was probably more nearly that which they held in Jehoiakim's roll.

It was in Egypt that Jeremiah died. It is then at least probable that this Egyptian copy dates from the time when Baruch was about to depart from the country, and was transcribed (of course in Hebrew) for the private use of such Jews as believed Jeremiah to be a true prophet. It would gradually obtain currency and be copied again and again, and would in time become the authoritative form of the Book of Jeremiah among the Egyptian exiles. Its critical authority negatively is little, because of the extreme haste with which the copy was necessarily made, and because the exigencies of time required all that was not absolutely indispensable to be omitted: affirmatively its authority is very great, for it assures us that all that is common to the two texts is as old as the time when they first separated from one another. Whenever Jeremiah 52 was added in Palestine it would not long remain unknown in Egypt. New colonists took with them copies of the fuller Hebrew text with the added appendix: but the shorter form was looked upon as that which had local authority. Patriotic Egyptian Jews doubtless held that it was the genuine text; and as such the Alexandrian translators gave it the preference, but they could have no objection to adding to their Version so useful an annex as the fifty-second chapter.

Even independently of the evidence of this Egyptian text the genuineness of nearly every part of the Book of Jeremiah is so generally acknowledged that an occasional footnote on some impugned passage is all that is necessary. The value of the double text rather lies in its shewing how quickly the writings of the prophets became generally current, and how impossible it was to interpolate them or introduce falsification on a large scale. The acknowledged genuineness of the Book of Jeremiah is also valuable in another respect, because no prophet so constantly quotes the words of his predecessors. He evidently knew the other Scriptures by heart, and perpetually reproduces them, but in his own way. He never quotes them briefly and succinctly, but develops them, so as to give them something of his own soft luxuriance; but his testimony to the existence of them in the same state as that in which we have them at present, is most clear. Most numerous are his quotations from the Pentateuch, and especially from the Book of Deuteronomy. It had been so lately found (~~1218~~ 2 Kings 22:8) that this is just what we should expect; his young mind must have been deeply penetrated by such a scene as that described in ~~1231~~ 2 Kings 23:1-3. And such quotations in a book of which the genuineness is acknowledged, are of the greatest possible value for the criticism of the writings from which they are taken.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 1

~~2000~~ **Jeremiah 1:1.** *The words of Jeremiah* The usual title of the prophetic books is “the Word of the Lord,” but the two books of Amos and Jeremiah are called the words of those prophets, probably because they contain not merely the words of those prophets, probably because they contain not merely prophecies, but also the record of much which belongs to the personal history of the writers. This title might therefore be translated the “life of Jeremiah” or “acts of Jeremiah,” though some understand by it a collection of the prophecies of Jeremiah. One derivation of Jeremiah’s name is “God exalteth.”

Hilkiah, may have been the high priest of that name.

That were Or, who was, i.e., dwelt. The meaning is, that Jeremiah was a priest who dwelt at Anathoth.

~~2000~~ **Jeremiah 1:2.** *Came* literally, was (and in ~~2000~~ Jeremiah 1:4); the phrase implies that Jeremiah possessed God’s word from that time onward, not fitfully as coming and going, but constantly.

The thirteenth year of his reign According to the ordinary reckoning, this would be 629 B.C., but if the Ptolemaic canon be right in putting the capture of Jerusalem at 586 B.C., it would be two years later, namely 627 B.C. However, according to the Assyrian chronology, it would be 608 B.C. It was the year after that in which Josiah began his reforms.

~~2000~~ **Jeremiah 1:3.** The whole period contained in this verse is no less than 40 years and 6 months, namely, 18 years under Josiah, two periods of 11 years each under Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and 3 months under each of the omitted kings, Jehoahaz and Jeconiah.

In the fifth month The capture of Jerusalem took place in the fourth month, but its destruction was in the fifth month (see the marginal references), the ninth day of which was subsequently kept as a fast-day (^{<300B>}Zechariah 7:3).

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:4.** This history of Jeremiah's call to his office formed a part of his first address to the people. He claimed to act by an external authority, and to speak not his own words but those of Yahweh; and this even when resisting the divine call (see ^{<245B>}Jeremiah 15:13; 20:7,14-18).

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:5.** Rather, "Before I formed thee in the belly." I approved of thee (as one fit for the prophetic office),"and before thou camest forth from the womb" I made thee holy (dedicated thee to holy uses); I have appointed thee (now by this public call to be) "a prophet unto the nations."

Unto the nations The privileges contained in this verse are so great as in their full sense to be true only of Christ Himself, while to Jeremiah they belong as being in so many particulars a type of Christ.

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:6.** There is no resistance on Jeremiah's part, but he shrinks back alarmed.

I cannot speak i.e., "I cannot prophesy," I have not those powers of oratory necessary for success. The prophets of Israel were the national preachers in religious matters, and their orators in political.

I am a child This implies nothing very definite about Jeremiah's age. Still the long duration of his prophetic mission makes it probable that he was very young when called to the office, as also were Isaiah, Hosea, Zechariah, and others.

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:7.** Jeremiah suggested two difficulties, the first inexperience, the second timidity. God now removes the first of these. Inexperience is no obstacle where the duty is simple obedience His timidity is removed by the promise given him in the next verse.

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:9.** *Touched* "Made it touch." This was the symbol of the bestowal of divine grace and help, by which that want of eloquence, which the prophet had pleaded as a disqualification, was removed.

^{<200B>}**Jeremiah 1:10.** *I have ... set thee over* literally, I have made thee Pakeed, i.e., deputy. This title is given only to these invested with high

authority (e.g. ^{<0413>}Genesis 41:34; ^{<1241>}2 Chronicles 24:11; ^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:1; 29:26). From God's side, the prophet is a mere messenger, speaking what he is told, doing what he is commanded. From man's side, he is God's vicegerent, with power "to root out, and to pull down."

Root out ... pull down In the Hebrew, the verbs present an instance of the alliteration so common in the prophets, and agreeable to oriental taste. The former signifies the destruction of anything planted, the latter refers to buildings.

To throw down More exactly, to tear in pieces. There are four words of destruction, and but two words of restoration, as if the message were chiefly of evil. And such was Jeremiah's message to his contemporaries. Yet are all God's dealings finally for the good of His people. The Babylonian exile was, for the moment, a time of chastisement; it also became a time of national repentance (see ^{<2415>}Jeremiah 24:5-7).

^{<2011>}**Jeremiah 1:11.** *What seest thou?* If we admit a supernatural element in prophecy, visions would be the most simple means of communication between God and man.

A rod of an almond tree Many translate "a staff of almond wood." The vision would thus signify that God — like a traveler, staff in hand — was just about to set forth upon His journey of vengeance. But the rendering of the King James Version is supported by ^{<0337>}Genesis 30:37. The word rendered "almond" comes from a root signifying "to be awake;" and as the almond blossoms in January, it seems to be awake while other trees are still sleeping, and therefore is a fit emblem of activity.

^{<2012>}**Jeremiah 1:12.** *Hasten* Rather, I watch over "my word to perform it."

^{<2013>}**Jeremiah 1:13.** The first vision was for the support of the prophet's own faith during his long struggle with his countrymen: the second explains to him the general nature of his mission. He was to be the bearer of tidings of a great national calamity about to break forth from the north. He sees a caldron. It was a vessel of metal (^{<2341>}Ezekiel 24:11), large enough to prepare the meal of a numerous community (^{<1208>}2 Kings 4:38), and broad at the top, as it was also used for washing purposes (^{<1818>}Psalms 60:8). This caldron was boiling furiously.

The face ... More correctly the margin, i.e toward the south. We must suppose this caldron set upon a pile of inflammable materials. As they consume it settles down unevenly, with the highest side toward the north, so that its face is turned the other way and looks southward. Should it still continue so to settle, the time must finally come when it will be overturned, and will pour the whole mass of its boiling contents upon the south.

~~2014~~ **Jeremiah 1:14.** *Out of the north ...* The caldron represents the great military empires upon the Euphrates. In Hezekiah's time, Nineveh was at their head; but stormed by the armies of Cyaxares and Nabopalassar it is itself now the victim whose limbs are seething in the caldron, and the seat of empire has been transferred to Babylon. But whoever may for the time prevail, the tide of passion and carnage is sure finally to pour itself upon Judaea.

An evil shall break forth "The evil shall be opened," shall show itself, be disclosed from the north: that special evil, which from the days of Micah (~~3382~~ Micah 3:12) all the prophets had denounced upon the Jews if they lapsed into idolatry. At present the caldron is fiercely boiling upon the Euphrates. As soon as either of the parties struggling there gains the victory it will pour the whole seething mass over other countries in the shape of an invading army (see ~~2517~~ Jeremiah 25:17-26).

~~2015~~ **Jeremiah 1:15.** *I will call* I am calling. The judgment has begun. God is summoning His hosts to the war.

Families The various races by which the provinces of the Babylonian empire were populated.

They shall set every one his throne The chiefs of these various races come as God's ministers to hold solemn court, and give sentence in His name (see ~~2519~~ Jeremiah 25:9). They therefore set each one his throne in the usual place for administering justice, namely, the entering in of the gates, where a large open space was always left in cities for the purpose. Viewed in one light war is the boiling caldron of human passion, upset by hazard, and bringing only ruin in its course; in the other it is God sitting in judgment, with the kings of the earth as His assessors, solemnly pronouncing sentence upon the guilty.

Against all the walls ... Sentence judicially pronounced, the nations come to execute judgment by mounting as enemies upon her walls and storming her cities.

^{<4016>}**Jeremiah 1:16.** In accordance with the custom of law courts, the crimes of the guilty city are mentioned in the sentence. The charges brought against her are three: first, the desertion of the true God; next, the offering incense to false gods, and, lastly, the making obeisance to, or bowing down (^{<1158>}2 Kings 5:18) before images of human workmanship.

^{<4017>}**Jeremiah 1:17.** *Gird up thy loins* A symbol of preparation for earnest exertion, and implying also firm purpose, and some degree of alacrit

Be not dismayed ... literally, “be not dismayed at their faces, lest I dismay thee before their faces.” Naturally despondent and self-distrustful, there was yet no feebleness in Jeremiah’s character. There was in him a moral superiority of the will, which made him, at any cost to himself, faithfully discharge whatever his conscience told him was his duty.

^{<4018>}**Jeremiah 1:18.** Metaphorically the walls and fortifications of the city represent the prophet’s power of patiently enduring the attacks of his enemies; while the iron pillar, supporting the whole weight of the roof (^{<0769>}Judges 16:29); ^{<1021>}1 Kings 7:21), signifies that no trials or sufferings would crush his steadfast will.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 2

In the prophecies contained in Jeremiah 2—6, we have, probably, the records of Jeremiah's earlier ministrations during the comparatively uneventful years of Josiah's reign. The great object of the prophet's mission was to urge upon the people the necessity of making use of that final opportunity of repentance then given them. If personal amendment followed upon the king's reforms Judah might yet be saved. We have then in these chapters such portions of Jeremiah's earlier teaching, published during Josiah's reign, as were deemed fit also for the Church's use in all time.

The prophecy (^{<2401>}Jeremiah 2:1-3:5) consists of three parts, of which the first (^{<2401>}Jeremiah 2:1-13) contains an appeal from God to all Israel, i.e., the whole twelve tribes, proving to them His past love, and that their desertion of Him was without ground or reason. In the second (^{<2404>}Jeremiah 2:14-28) the prophet shows that Israel's calamities were entirely the result of her apostasy. In the last (^{<2403>}Jeremiah 2:29—3:5) we see Judah imitating Samaria's sin, and hardening itself against correction.

^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 2:1.** *Moreover* literally, And. Notice the connection between Jeremiah's call and first prophecy.

^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 2:2.** Up to this time Jeremiah had lived at Anathoth, he is now to make Jerusalem the scene of his ministrations.

I remember ... Or, I have remembered for thee the grace "of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," thy going "after me in the wilderness" in an unsown land. Jeremiah contrasts the present unfriendly relations between Yahweh and His people with their past love. Israel, as often elsewhere, is represented as a young bride (^{<2368>}Ezekiel 16:8; ^{<2321>}Hosea 2:20; ^{<2008>}Joel 1:8). The walking after God in the wilderness was an act of love on Israel's part. Israel did leave Egypt at Moses' bidding, and at Sinai was solemnly espoused to Yahweh.

^{<2403>}**Jeremiah 2:3.** Render: "Israel" is an offering consecrated to Yahweh, His firstfruits of increase. The firstfruits were God's consecrated property, His portion of the whole harvest. Pagan, i.e., unconsecrated, nations must not meddle with Israel, because it is the nation consecrated to

God. If they do, they will bring such guilt upon themselves as those incur who eat the first-fruits (^{<R20>}Leviticus 22:10,16).

^{<416>}**Jeremiah 2:6.** Modern researches have shown that this description applies only to limited portions of the route of the Israelites through the Sinaitic peninsula.

^{<417>}**Jeremiah 2:7.** *A plentiful country* literally, “a land of the Carmel,” a Carmel land (see ^{<189>}1 Kings 18:19; ^{<297>}Isaiah 29:17 notes).

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 2:8.** The guilt of this idolatry is ascribed to the four ruling classes:

- (a) The accusation brought against THE PRIESTS is indifference.
- (b) “They that handle the law” belonged also to THE PRIESTLY CLASS (^{<330>}Deuteronomy 33:10). Their offence was that “they knew not God.” Compare ^{<311>}Micah 3:11.
- (c) The third class are “THE PASTORS” or SHEPHERDS, that is the temporal rulers. Their crime is disobedience.
- (d) The fourth class are “THE PROPHETS.” It was their business to press the moral and spiritual truths of the law home to the hearts of the people: but they drew their inspiration from Baal, the Sun-god. Upon the corruption of the prophetic order at this time, see the ^{<443>}Jeremiah 14:13 note.

Things that do not profit Here idols, which are not merely unreal, but injurious. See ^{<922>}1 Samuel 12:21; ^{<349>}Isaiah 44:9.

^{<419>}**Jeremiah 2:9.** *Plead* The word used by the plaintiff setting forth his accusation in a law-court (see ^{<333>}Job 33:13 note).

With you The present generation, who by joining in Manasseh’s apostasy have openly violated Yahweh’s covenant. The fathers made the nation what it now is, the children will receive it such as the present generation are now making it to be, and God will judge it according as the collective working of the past, the present, and the future tends to good or to evil.

^{<420>}**Jeremiah 2:10.** Kedar signifies the whole East, and the isles of Chittim (^{<232>}Isaiah 23:12 note) the West. If then you traverse all lands from

west to east, it will be impossible to find any nation guilty of such apostasy as that committed by Israel.

^{<2421>}**Jeremiah 2:11.** *A nation* A Gentile nation, in strong antithesis to people, the appellation of Israel.

Their glory Though the worship of the one true God is a nation's greatest glory, yet it is irksome because it puts a constraint on human passions.

That which doth not profit Israel had exchanged the prosperity which was God's reward of obedience for the calamities which resulted from idol-worship.

^{<2422>}**Jeremiah 2:12.** *Be astonished* The King James Version uses this word as equivalent "to be stupefied."

Desolate Or, "be dry." In horror at Israel's conduct the heavens shrivel and dry up.

^{<2423>}**Jeremiah 2:13.** The pagan are guilty of but one sin — idolatry; the covenant-people commit two — they abandon the true God; they serve idols.

Fountain Not a spring or natural fountain, but a tank or reservoir dug in the ground (see ^{<2407>}Jeremiah 6:7), and chiefly intended for storing living waters, i.e., those of springs and rivulets. The cistern was used for storing up rain-water only, and therefore the quantity it contained was limited.

^{<2424>}**Jeremiah 2:14.** It was Israel's glory to be Yahweh's servant (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 30:10), and slaves born in the house were more prized than those bought with money as being more faithful (^{<0144>}Genesis 14:14). Cannot Yahweh guard His own household? How happens it that a member of so powerful a family is spoiled? In the next verse the prophet gives the reason. Israel is a runaway slave, who has deserted the family to which he belongs by right of birth, and thereby brought upon himself trouble and misery.

^{<2425>}**Jeremiah 2:15.** *Upon him* Rather, against him. Israel has run away from his master's house, but only to find himself exposed to the beasts of prey in the wilderness.

They made his land waste The prophet points to the actual results of Israel's until the multiplication of wild beasts rendered human life unsafe (^{<1775>}2 Kings 17:25), but the Assyrian invasions had reduced Judaea to almost as sad a state.

Burned Others render, "leveled to the ground."

^{<2126>}**Jeremiah 2:16.** Noph, i.e., Napata, a town situated in the extreme south of Egypt. Some take it to be Memphis (see ^{<23913>}Isaiah 19:13 note).

Tahapanes Daphne Pelusii, a bordertown toward Palestine.

Have broken the crown of thy head literally, shall depasture the crown of thy head; i.e., make it bald; baldness was accounted by the Jews a sign of disgrace (^{<1123>}2 Kings 2:23), and also a mark of mourning (^{<2315D>}Isaiah 15:2, 22:12). The Egyptians in slaying Josiah, and capturing Jerusalem, brought ruin, disgrace, and sorrow upon the Jews.

The way Either, the journey through the wilderness, or the way of holiness.

^{<2128>}**Jeremiah 2:18.** *Sihor* The Nile. To lean upon Egypt was a violation of the principles of theocracy.

The two rivers are the two empires, and to drink their waters is to adopt their principles and religion. Compare also ^{<2386>}Isaiah 8:6,7.

^{<2129>}**Jeremiah 2:19.** *Correct thee* Or, "chastise thee." Alliances with foreign powers shall bring trouble and not safety.

^{<2121>}**Jeremiah 2:20.** *Transgress* Rather, as in marg. If the "yoke" and "bands" refer to the slavery in Egypt from which Yahweh freed Israel, the sense is — "For of old time I Yahweh broke thy yoke, I burst thy bands," not that thou mightest be free to do thy own will, but that thou mightest serve me: "and thou saidst, I will not serve."

When ... "For ... under every leafy tree thou" layest thyself down as a harlot. The verb indicates the eagerness with which she prostrates herself before the objects of her idolatrous worship.

^{<2121>}**Jeremiah 2:21.** *A noble vine* Properly, a Sorek vine (see ^{<238D>}Isaiah 5:2), which produced a red wine (^{<2331>}Proverbs 23:31), and had a lasting reputation (^{<14911>}Genesis 49:11).

A right seed literally, “a seed of truth,” i.e., true, genuine seed, not mixed with weeds, nor with seed of an inferior quality. Compare ^{<4134>}Matthew 13:24.

How then art thou turned Or, “How then” hast thou changed thyself “unto me” (i.e., to my hurt or vexation) “into the degenerate” branches “of a strange vine?” The stock, which was God’s planting, was genuine, and of the noblest sort: the wonder was how such a stock could produce shoots of a totally different kind (^{<4532>}Deuteronomy 32:32).

^{<4122>}**Jeremiah 2:22.** *Nitre* Or, natron, a mineral alkali, found in the Nile valley, where it effloresces upon the rocks and surfaces of the dykes, and in old time was carefully collected, and used to make lye for washing (see ^{<4151>}Proverbs 25:20).

Sope A vegetable alkali, now called “potash,” because obtained from the ashes of plants. Its combination with oils, etc., to form soap was not known to the Hebrews until long after Jeremiah’s time, but they used the lye, formed by passing water through the ashes. Thus then, though Israel use both mineral and vegetable alkalies, the most powerful detergents known, yet will she be unable to wash away the stains of her apostasy.

Thine iniquity is marked i.e., as a stain.

^{<4123>}**Jeremiah 2:23.** In their defense of themselves (compare ^{<4125>}Jeremiah 2:35), the people probably appealed to the maintenance of the daily sacrifice, and the Mosaic ritual: and even more confidently perhaps to Josiah’s splendid restoration of the temple, and to the suppression of the open worship of Baal. All such pleas availed little as long as the rites of Moloch were still privately practiced.

Thy way in the valley i.e., of Hinnom (see ^{<4230>}2 Kings 23:10 note). From the time of Ahaz it had been the seat of the worship of Moloch, and the prophet more than once identifies Moloch with Baal. “Way” is put metaphorically for “conduct, doings.”

Traversing Interlacing her ways. The word describes the tangled mazes of the dromedary’s course, as she runs here and there in the heat of her passion.

^{<4124>}**Jeremiah 2:24.** *A wild donkey used to the wilderness* The type of an untamed and reckless nature.

Snuffeth up the wind The wind brings with it the scent of the male. Israel does not wait until temptation comes of itself, but looks out for any and every incentive to idolatry.

Occasion ... month i.e., the pairing season.

^{<4025>}**Jeremiah 2:25.** God the true husband exhorts Israel not to run barefoot, and with parched throat, like a shameless adulteress, after strangers.

There is no hope i.e., It is in vain.

^{<4027>}**Jeremiah 2:27.** “Stone” being feminine in Hebrew is here represented as the mother.

Arise, and save us Whether it be idolatry or infidelity, it satisfies only in tranquil and prosperous times. No sooner does trouble come, than the deep conviction of the existence of a God, which is the witness for Him in our heart, resumes its authority, and man prays.

^{<4028>}**Jeremiah 2:28.** A question of bitter irony. Things are made for some use. Now is the time for thy deities to prove themselves real by being useful. When every city has its special deity, surely among so many there might be found one able to help his worshippers.

O Judah Hereto the argument had been addressed to Israel: suddenly the prophet charges Judah with the habitual practice of idolatry, and points to the conclusion, that as Jerusalem has been guilty of Samaria’s sin, it must suffer Samaria’s punishment.

^{<4030>}**Jeremiah 2:30.** *Your own sword hath detoured your prophets* An allusion probably to Manasseh (^{<1216>}2 Kings 21:16). Death was the usual fate of the true prophet (^{<4026>}Nehemiah 9:26; ^{<4137>}Matthew 23:37).

^{<4031>}**Jeremiah 2:31.** Or, “O generation” that ye are! An exclamation Of indignation at their hardened resistance to God.

A land of darkness This word is written in Hebrew with two accents, as being a compound, signifying not merely darkness, but the darkness of Yahweh, i.e., very great darkness.

We are lords Others render it: We rove about, wander about at our will, go where we like.

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:32.** A bride treasures all her life the girdle, which first indicated that she was a married woman, just as brides now treasure the wedding ring; but Israel, Yahweh's bride (^{241E2}Jeremiah 2:2), cherishes no fond memorials of past affection.

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:33.** *Why trimmest thou thy way* literally, "Why makest thou thy way good," a phrase used here of the pains taken by the Jews to learn the idolatries of foreign nations.

The wicked ones ... Or, "therefore thou hast taught" thy ways wickednesses."

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:34.** *I have not found it ...* Rather, thou didst not find them breaking into thy house. The meaning is, that these poor innocents had committed no crime: they were not thieves caught in the act, whom the Law permitted men to slay (^{241E2}Exodus 22:2), and therefore Israel in killing them was guilty of murder. The one crime here of theft is put for crime generally.

Upon all these Or, because of all this. Thou killedst the poor innocents, not for any crime, but because of this thy lust for idolatry.

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:35.** *Because I am innocent* Rather, But "I am innocent," or, "I am acquitted." Those blood-stains cannot be upon my skirts, because now, in king Josiah's days, the idolatry of Manasseh has been put away.

Shall turn from me Or, has turned away "from me."

Plead Or, enter into judgment.

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:36.** *To change thy way* The rival parties at Jerusalem looked one to Assyria, the other to Egypt, for safety. As one or other for the time prevailed, the nation "changed its way," sending its embassies now eastward to Nineveh, now westward to Memphis.

Thou also ... literally, also of Egypt "shalt thou be ashamed." This was literally fulfilled by the failure of the attempt to raise the siege of Jerusalem (^{241E2}Jeremiah 37:5).

^{241E3}**Jeremiah 2:37.** *From him* From it, from this Egypt, which though fem. as a land, yet as a people may be used as a masc. (compare ^{241E2}Jeremiah 46:8). Now that Nineveh is trembling before the armies of

Cyaxares and Nabopalassar, thou hastenest to Egypt, hoping to rest upon her strength: but thou shalt retrace thy steps, with thy hands clasped upon thy head, disgraced and discarded.

Confidences Those in whom thou confidest.

In them literally, “with respect to them.”

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 3

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 3:1.** *They say* Or, That is to say. The prophet has completed his survey of Israel's conduct, and draws the conclusion that as an adulterous wife could not be taken back by her husband, so Israel has forfeited her part in the covenant with God. Apparently the opening word, which literally means "to say," only introduces the quotation in the margin.

Yet return again to me Or, "and thinkest thou to return unto me!" The whole argument is not of mercy, but is the proof that after her repeated adulteries, Israel could not again take her place as wife. To think of returning to God, with the marriage-law unrepealed, was folly.

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 3:2.** These words are not the language of consolation to the conscience-stricken, but of vehement expostulation with hardened sinners. They prove, therefore, the truth of the interpretation put upon the preceding verse.

As the Arabian ... The freebooting propensities of the Bedouin had passed in ancient times into a proverb. As eager as the desert-tribes were for plunder, so was Israel for idolatry.

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 3:4.** Or, Hast thou *Not from this time* called "me, My Father, thou art the" husband "of my youth?" i.e., from the time of Josiah's reforms in his eighteenth year, in opposition to "of old time" (^{<410>}Jeremiah 2:20).

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 3:5.** Rather, "Will he, the young husband," retain, "keep up His anger forever!" These words should be joined to ^{<410>}Jeremiah 3:4.

Behold ... Rather, "Behold, thou hast spoken" thus, but thou hast "done evil things" persistently. The King James Version translates as if Judah's words and deeds were both evil. Really her words were fair, but her deeds proved them to be false.

And here ends the prophecy, most interesting as showing what was the general nature of Jeremiah's exhortations to his countrymen, during the 14 years of Josiah's reign. He sets before them God and Israel united by a covenant of marriage, to the conditions of which Yahweh is ever true, while Israel practices with zest every form of idolatry. Therefore, the divine

blessing is withheld. It is an honest and manly warning, and the great lesson it teaches us is, that with God nothing avails but a real and heartfelt repentance followed by a life of holiness and sincere devotion to His service.

^{<24R6>} **Jeremiah 3:6-4:4** — “*The Call to Repentance*”

The former prophecy ended with the denunciation of God’s perpetual anger because of Israel’s obstinate persistence in sin. Now there is an invitation to repentance, and the assurance of forgiveness. The argument is as follows: Israel had been guilty of apostasy, and therefore God had put her away. Unwarned by this example her more guilty sister Judah persists in the same sins (^{<24R6>}Jeremiah 3:6-11). Israel therefore is invited to, return to the marriage-covenant by repentance (^{<24R2>}Jeremiah 3:12-14), in which case she and Judah, accepted upon the like condition, shall become joint members of a spiritual theocracy. (^{<24R5>}Jeremiah 3:15-18). The repentance which God requires must be real (^{<24R9>}Jeremiah 3:19—4:4).

^{<24R6>} **Jeremiah 3:6.** *Backsliding Israel* The original is very strong: Hast thou seen Apostasy? i.e., Israel: as though Israel were the very personification of the denial of God.

She is gone up Rather, she goes; it is her habitual practice.

^{<24R7>} **Jeremiah 3:7.** Or, “And I said (i.e., within myself), After she has done all these things, she will return to me.” But she did not return.

Treacherous literally, “Falsehood,” i.e., false, faithless. The character of the two sisters is plainly marked. Samaria is apostate; she abandons Yahweh’s worship altogether. Judah maintains the form only; her secret desires are set upon the orgies of pagan worship.

^{<24R8>} **Jeremiah 3:8.** Rather, “And I saw” that because apostate “Israel” had “committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her” the writing of her divorcement, “yet” false “Judah her sister feared not.” ... The expression, “For all the causes whereby,” is probably the actual formula with which writings of divorcement commenced.

^{<24R9>} **Jeremiah 3:9.** *Lightness* Others render as in the margin.

Defiled Rather, profaned. The land especially consecrated to Yahweh’s service was treated by Judah as a common land.

Jeremiah 3:10. *Her treacherous sister Judith* These words are a sort of refrain, thrice (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 3:7,8,10) repeated before God finally pronounces Judah more culpable than Israel.

Jeremiah 3:11. *Hath justified herself* Judah had had the benefit of the warning given by Israel's example. Both abandon Yahweh's service for idolatry, but Israel is simply "apostate," Judah is also false.

The verse is important,

(1) as accounting for the destruction of Jerusalem so soon after the pious reign of Josiah. Manasseh's crimes had defiled the land, but it was by rejecting the reforms of Josiah that the people finally profaned it, and sealed their doom:

(2) as showing that it is not by the acts of its government that a nation stands or falls. Ahaz and Manasseh lent the weight of their influence to the cause of idolatry: Hezekiah and Josiah to the cause of truth. But the nation had to determine which should prevail. Excepting a remnant it embraced idolatry, and brought upon itself ruin: in the remnant the nation again revived (²⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 24:5,7).

Jeremiah 3:12. *The north* The ten tribes, settled by Salmanezer in the north of Assyria.

I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you literally, I will not cause my face "to fall upon you:" i.e., "I will not receive you with averted looks." The "and" before this clause should be omitted, as also before the next clause, "I will not keep ..."

I will not keep All God's promises and threats are conditional upon man's conduct.

Jeremiah 3:13. *Acknowledge* literally, "know thy iniquity;" know that thy doings are iniquitous.

Scattered thy ways Wandered in search of those idolatries which foreign nations practice.

Jeremiah 3:14. *Children ... married* The twofold relationship gives a double certainty of acceptance. As children, they were sure of a father's

love, as a wife they might hope for a revival of past affection from the husband of their youth.

One of a city, and two of a family The family (in Hebrew) is far larger than a city, as it embraces all the descendants of a common ancestor. Thus, the tribe of Judah was divided into only four or five families. However national the apostasy, it does not involve in its guilt the few who are faithful, and the promises are still their rightful possession.

To Zion To the true Church. The fulfillment of the promise began with the return to Palestine after the Babylonian exile, but is complete only in Christianity.

^{<4815>}**Jeremiah 3:15.** *Pastors* “Kings, rulers” (compare ^{<4818>}Jeremiah 2:8). Not military usurpers (^{<3804>}Hosea 8:4), but true servants of God, as David (^{<0934>}1 Samuel 13:14).

^{<4816>}**Jeremiah 3:16.** *In those days* This and the phrase “the latter days,” had become under the Messianic teaching of the prophets a regular formula for the time of Christ’s coming, when all the nation’s hopes would be fulfilled.

The ark was the center of the Mosaic economy, containing within it the two tables’ of the Law as the conditions of the covenant and having over it, upon the mercy-seat, the Shechinah as the visible sign of God’s presence. But “in those days” the symbol must pass away, because God will then dwell in His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit (^{<4816>}1 Corinthians 3:16), and the terms of the covenant will be written on their hearts (^{<2813>}Jeremiah 31:33).

Neither shall they visit it Rather, neither shall they miss it; i.e., they will not trouble about it, nor regret its loss.

Neither shall that be done anymore Rather, “neither shall it (the ark) be made anymore;” it shall not be renewed or repaired, because the tabernacle of God will be one “made without hands” (^{<3011>}Hebrews 9:11), even the heart of His believing people.

^{<4817>}**Jeremiah 3:17.** *The throne of the LORD* Yahweh’s throne shall not be the ark, but Jerusalem, i.e., the Christian Church (^{<6202>}Revelation 21:2; ^{<4026>}Galatians 4:26).

To Jerusalem The Septuagint and Syriac are probably right in omitting this word.

Imagination ... Stubbornness (margin). A word always used in a bad sense, for “obstinacy.”

^{248B}**Jeremiah 3:18.** *With* To (margin). The prophet has just described the return of the ten tribes (^{248B}Jeremiah 3:14), etc. Israel is represented as the first to repent, and Judah must go to her, in order that they may come together back to the holy land, divided no longer into Jews and Israelites, but merged into one people.

Out of the land of the north The objection that the Jews were not carried like the Israelites into the northern provinces of Assyria (^{248B}Jeremiah 3:12), but into Babylonia, misinterprets the whole prophecy, the gist of which is that in case of Israel’s repentance, Judah must humbly seek her out, and be content henceforward to take the inferior place, as having been the more guilty (see ^{248B}Jeremiah 3:11).

^{248B}**Jeremiah 3:19.** *But I* (emphatic). “And I.” The emphasis lies in the abundant goodness of God contrasted with Israel’s waywardness.

How ...? Rather, How ...! i.e., How gloriously! With what honor will I place thee among the children!

Goodly ... of the hosts ... Rather, “a heritage of the chief beauty of nations.” The general sense is, that Israel “possesses the most beautiful territory of any nation.”

And I said This clause is not the answer to a difficulty, as in the King James Version, but completes the description of God’s loving purpose. “I said within myself that I would treat thee as a son, and give thee a glorious inheritance: I also said, that ye would return my love, would call me Father, and be untrue to me no more.”

^{248B}**Jeremiah 3:20.** *Surely as* Rather: “Just as.”

^{248B}**Jeremiah 3:21.** *Upon the high places* Upon those bare table-lands, which previously had been the scene of Israel’s idolatries (^{248B}Jeremiah 3:2). The prophet supposes the offer of mercy to Israel if repentant to have been accepted, and describes Israel’s agony of grief now that she is convinced of her sins.

Weeping and supplications literally, “the weeping of earliest prayers for mercy.”

For they have ... Rather, because “they have perverted their way,” literally, made it crooked. It gives the reason of their cry for mercy.

~~4RE3~~ **Jeremiah 3:22.** Yahweh’s answer to their prayer in ~~4RE3~~ Jeremiah 3:21 is immediately followed by their acceptance of the offer of divine mercy.

For Rather, because ... This profession of faith gives the reason why they return to Yahweh. The whole description is most graphically conceived. The people weeping upon the hills: God’s gracious voice bidding them return: the glad cry of the penitents exclaiming that they come: the profession of faith won from them by the divine love; these form altogether a most touching picture of a national repentance.

~~4RE3~~ **Jeremiah 3:23.** Rather, Surely “in vain from the hills” is the revelry of the mountains. The penitents contrast in it the uselessness of idol-worship with the salvation which Yahweh gives to His people.

~~4RE3~~ **Jeremiah 3:24.** *For ...* And. It is the continuation of the thought in ~~4RE3~~ Jeremiah 3:23. Idolatry was there described as unprofitable, here as ruinous and hurtful.

Shame literally, the shame (Bosheth, personified), that is, “Baal.” The names “Bosheth” and “Baal” are constantly interchanged. Compare ~~4RE3~~ Judges 6:31,32.

Their flocks and their herds The temperate and sober enjoyments connected with Yahweh’s sacrifices led to no excess, whereas in idol-worship the people, after sitting down “to eat and drink, rose up to play,” and wasted both health and substance in licentious revelry.

Their sons ... This probably refers to human sacrifices.

~~4RE3~~ **Jeremiah 3:25.** *We lie down ...* Or, We will lie down: we are ready to throw ourselves upon the ground in bitter humiliation.

Covereth literally, shall cover us. We will hide our face from others.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 4

The conclusion of both sides of the prophecy; to Israel, ^{<400>}Jeremiah 4:1,2; to Judah, ^{<400>}Jeremiah 4:3,4.

^{<400>}**Jeremiah 4:1.** *Return* The repentance of Israel described in ^{<400>}Jeremiah 3:21-25 was a hope, and not a reality. The return, literally, would be their restoration to their land; spiritually, their abandoning their sins.

^{<400>}Jeremiah 4:1,2 should be translated as follows:

If thou wouldst return, O Israel, saith Yahweh. Unto Me thou shalt return: And if thou wouldst remove thy abominations from before Me, And not wander to and fro, But wouldst swear truly, uprightly; and justly By the living Yahweh;

Then shall the pagan bless themselves ...

In him In Yahweh. Two great truths are taught in this verse;

- (1) that the Gentiles were to be members of the Church of the Messiah;
- (2) that Israel's special office was to be God's mediator in this great work.

Thus, Jeremiah is in exact accord with the evangelical teaching of Isaiah.

^{<400>}**Jeremiah 4:3.** *To the men* To each man "of Judah." They are summoned individually to repentance.

Break up literally, Fallow for you a fallow ground, i.e., do not sow the seeds of repentance in unfit soil, but just as the farmer prepares the ground, by clearing it of weeds, and exposing it to the sun and air, before entrusting to it the seed, so must you regard repentance as a serious matter, requiring forethought, and anxious labor. To sow in unfallowed ground was practically to sow on land full of thorns.

^{<400>}**Jeremiah 4:4.** See the ^{<5006>}Deuteronomy 10:16 note. Nature, such as it is in itself, unconsecrated to God, is to be removed from our inner selves, that a new and spiritual nature may take its place.

Lest my fury ... God is long-suffering, but unless this change take place, the time of judgment must at length come to all as it came to Jerusalem — “like fire” (compare ^{<4013>}1 Corinthians 3:13; ^{<3052>}Philippians 2:12,13).

^{<3045>}**Jeremiah 4:5-6:30** “*God’s Judgment upon the Unrepentant*”

A group of prophecies now commences, extending to ^{<2025>}Jeremiah 10:25, but broken at the beginning of Jeremiah 7 by a new heading. The subject of them all is the same, namely, the approaching devastation of Judaea by a hostile army in punishment of its persistence in idolatry. The prophecy of Jeremiah 7 was probably written in the first year of Jehoiakim, while as regards the rest they probably extended over a considerable period of time. This group, which we may reasonably believe to have come down to us much as it stood in Jehoiakim’s scroll, gives us a general view of the nature of Jeremiah’s efforts during that important period, when under Josiah a national reformation was still possible, and the exile might have been averted. The prophecy (Jeremiah 7), spoken in the first year of Jehoiakim, when the probation of Judah was virtually over, was the solemn closing of the appeal to the conscience of the people, and a protest, while the new king was still young upon his throne, against that ruinous course upon which he so immediately entered.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 4:5.** Rather, Make proclamation “in Judah, and in Jerusalem” bid them hear, “and say, Blow the trumpet” throughout “the land:” cry aloud “and say etc.” The prophecy begins with a loud alarm of war. The verse sets forth well, in its numerous commands, the excitement and confusion of such a time.

^{<2005>}**Jeremiah 4:6.** *The standard* A flag or signal, to which the people were to rally.

Retire, stay not Rather, gather your goods together: linger not; “for I” (emphatic, Yahweh) am bringing at this very time etc.

^{<2007>}**Jeremiah 4:7.** Rather, A “lion” ... a “destroyer” of nations: a metaphor descriptive of the impending calamity. A lion is just rousing himself from his lair, but no common one. It is destroyer, not of men, but of nations.

Is on his way literally, “has broken up his encampment.” Jeremiah uses a military term strictly referring to the striking of tents in preparation for the march.

Without an inhabitant The final stage of destruction, actually reached in the utter depopulation of Judaea consequent upon Gedaliah's murder.

^{<4018>}**Jeremiah 4:8.** *Is not turned ...* As long as their sins are unrepented of, so long must their punishment continue.

^{<4010>}**Jeremiah 4:10.** *Ah, Lord GOD!* Alas! my Lord Yahweh: an expression of disapproval on Jeremiah's part. Jeremiah had constantly to struggle against the misgivings of his own melancholy nature, but he never let them prevent him from doing his duty. See the introduction of Jeremiah.

Ye shall have peace These words are generally referred to the false prophets; they rather refer to real prophecies of future blessedness promised to the Jews. Jeremiah could not reconcile the doom he was now commanded to pronounce, either with his previous prophecy, or with what he read in the writings of his predecessors. Time only could solve the difficulty. Upon the struggles of the prophets to understand their own predictions see ^{<4010>}1 Peter 1:10,11.

Unto the soul The sword has reached the life. i.e., has inflicted a mortal wound.

^{<4011>}**Jeremiah 4:11.** *At that time* See ^{<4017>}Jeremiah 4:7. Though the revelation of the certainty of Judah's ruin wrings from Jeremiah a cry of despair, yet it is but for a moment; he immediately returns to the delivery of God's message.

A dry wind literally, A clear wind. The Samum is probably meant, a dry parching east wind blowing from the Arabian desert, before which vegetation withers, and human life becomes intolerable.

Not to fan ... The Syrian farmers make great use of the wind for separating the chaff from the grain: but when the Samum blows labor becomes impossible. It is not for use, but for destruction.

^{<4012>}**Jeremiah 4:12.** Or, as in the margin; i.e., a wind more full, more impetuous than those winds which serve for fanning and cleansing the grain.

Unto me Rather, for me: to perform my will.

²⁰¹³**Jeremiah 4:13.** His troops move on in large masses like dark threatening clouds (²⁰¹¹Joel 2:2).

Woe unto us! for we are spoiled Jeremiah's own cry of grief.

²⁰¹⁴**Jeremiah 4:14.** *Thy vain thoughts* "Thy" iniquitous "thoughts." "Aven," the word used here, is especially applied to the sin of idolatry: thus Bethel is generally called Bethaven by Hosea (²⁰¹⁵Hosea 4:15; 5:8, ...), because instead of being the house of God, El, it was the house of an iniquity, Aven, the golden calf.

²⁰¹⁵**Jeremiah 4:15.** *Dan* The border-town of Palestine on the north (¹⁶³⁰Deuteronomy 34:1).

Mount Ephraim The northern boundary of Judaea itself. The invading army presses on so rapidly, that scarcely have the news arrived of its appearance at Dan, before fresh messengers announce that it has traversed the whole length of Galilee, and is now defiling through the mountains of Samaria.

Affliction The same word, aven, occurs in ²⁰¹⁴Jeremiah 4:14, and apparently there is a play upon its double meaning: for from a root signifying worthlessness, it is used both for wickedness and for misery. Thus, the "iniquity" of Judah proves also, to be her "affliction," as being the cause of the ruin inflicted by the enemy.

²⁰¹⁶**Jeremiah 4:16.** Proclaim ye to the pagan, "Behold!" Cry aloud concerning "Jerusalem, that watchers" are on their way "from a far country: and" will "give out their voice against the cities of Judah." The pagan are summoned to witness the chastisement of Jerusalem, that they may take warning thereby. By "watchers" are meant besiegers, who will surround the city with a line of sentinels.

²⁰¹⁷**Jeremiah 4:17.** Jeremiah compares the tents of the besiegers on guard round Jerusalem to the booths erected by shepherds or farmers for the protection of their flocks or produce.

²⁰¹⁸**Jeremiah 4:18.** *Thy wickedness* This siege is thy wickedness, i.e., in its results; or better, this is thy wretchedness, this army and thy approaching ruin is thy misery.

Because "For." To feel that one's misery is the result of one's own doings adds bitterness to the anguish, and makes it reach, penetrate to the heart.

Jeremiah 4:19. The verse is best translated as a series of ejaculations, in which the people express their grief at the ravages committed by the enemy:

“My bowels! My bowels!” I writhe in pain! The walls of my heart!
 “My heart” moans for me! I cannot keep silence! For “thou hast heard, O my soul,” the trumpet’s voice! “The alarm of war!”

Jeremiah 4:20. *Destruction ...* Or, breaking upon breaking (**Jeremiah 4:6**). The news of one breaking, one violent calamity, follows close upon another.

My curtains The curtains of the tent, put here for the tents themselves. tents were the ordinary habitations of the Israelites.

Jeremiah 4:21. *The standard* See **Jeremiah 4:6**. The alarm caused by the invasion is graphically described. The people are dispersed over the land following their usual pursuits, when tidings come of the enemy’s approach. The only chance of escape is a hasty flight. Flags stream from the hills to mark the safest route, while the blasts of the trumpet quicken the steps of the wavering.

Jeremiah 4:23-26. In four verses each beginning with “I beheld,” the prophet sees in vision the desolate condition of Judaea during the Babylonian captivity.

Jeremiah 4:23. *Without form, and void* Desolate and void (see **Genesis 1:2** note). The land has returned to a state of chaos (marginal reference note).

And the heavens And upward to the heavens. The imagery is that of the last day of judgment. To Jeremiah’s vision all was as though the day of the Lord had come, and earth returned to the state in which it was before the first creative word (see **2 Peter 3:10**).

Jeremiah 4:24. *Moved lightly* “Reeled to and fro,” from the violence of the earthquake.

Jeremiah 4:26. *The fruitful place* The Carmel (**Jeremiah 2:7**), where the population had been most dense, and the labors of the farmer most richly rewarded, has become the wilderness.

At the presence i.e., because of, at the command of Yahweh, and because of His anger.

^{<40E>}**Jeremiah 4:27.** *Desolate* a waste.

One of the most striking points of prophecy is, that however severe. may be the judgment pronounced against Judah, there is always the reservation, that the ruin shall not be complete (^{<40E>}Jeremiah 3:14).

^{<40E>}**Jeremiah 4:28.** *For ...* Because of this doom upon Judah.

I have purposed it The Septuagint arrangement restores the parallelism:

For I have spoken, and will not repent,
I have purposed, and will not turn back from it.

^{<40E>}**Jeremiah 4:29.** *The whole city ...* Rather, Every city is fleeing. All the inhabitants of the tokens flee to Jerusalem for protection, or seek refuge in the woods and rocks.

The horsemen and bowmen The cavalry (^{<40E>}Jeremiah 4:13) and bowmen formed the chief strength of the Assyrian armies.

They shall go They have gone.

^{<40E>}**Jeremiah 4:30.** Translate, And thou, O plundered one, what effectest thou, that “thou clothest thyself with” scarlet, that “thou deckest” thyself “with ornaments of gold,” that thou enlargest thine eyes with antimony (^{<40E>}2 Kings 9:30 note)? “In vain” dost thou beautify thyself; “thy lovers” despise” thee, they” seek “thy life.” Jerusalem is represented as a woman who puts on her best attire to gain favor in the eyes of her lovers, but in vain.

^{<40E>}**Jeremiah 4:31.**

For a cry have I heard as of one writhing in vain: Anguish as of one that bringeth forth her first-born: The cry of the daughter of Zion. She gasps for breath: she stretches out her palms: Woe is me! for my soul faints before the murderers.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 5

The capture and the destruction of Jerusalem was owing to its utter immorality. Josiah's reforms were frustrated by the immorality prevalent among all classes. The prophet sees evil triumphing, but we must not take his words so literally as to conclude that there were no good men then in Jerusalem (compare ^{<4407>}Jeremiah 4:27; 24:5).

^{<4408>}**Jeremiah 5:1.** *The broad places* The open spaces next the gates, and other places of concourse.

A man Or, anyone.

That executeth "That" practiceth.

Truth uprightness, probity (so in ^{<4408>}Jeremiah 5:3).

^{<4408>}**Jeremiah 5:2.** Though they take the most binding form of oath, they do so only as a means of deceiving others.

^{<4408>}**Jeremiah 5:3.** *Upon the truth* God looks to the "faith," the upright purpose of the heart, and without it the nominal fealty of an oath is an abomination.

^{<4408>}**Jeremiah 5:4.** *Therefore* More simply "and."

They are foolish Or, they act foolishly (see ^{<4421>}Numbers 12:11), not having that knowledge which would enable them to guide their ways with discretion.

^{<4408>}**Jeremiah 5:5.** *They have known ...* Men of education, who read the Scriptures, and learn from them the nature of God's judgments.

But these literally, surely they (compare ^{<4404>}Jeremiah 5:4).

The yoke The Mosaic law.

And burst ... They have torn off, torn themselves loose from.

The bonds The fastenings by which the yoke was fixed upon the necks of the oxen.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:6.** *Evenings* See the margin. From its habit of skulking about in the twilight the wolf is often called the “evening wolf” (^{<308>}Habakkuk 1:8; ^{<418>}Zephaniah 3:3), but the word used here means a sandy desert.

Leopard panther.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:7.** Rather, Why, “for what reason” should “I pardon thee?”

When ... Or, “though I bound them to me by oath, yet they committed adultery.”

The harlots' houses The harlot’s house, i.e., the temple of an idol; the prophet had also in view (see ^{<418>}Jeremiah 5:8) the unchastity which accompanied most forms of nature-worship.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:8.** *In the morning* Render, they rove about. Some prefer, “(horses) from Mesech.”

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:10.** *Her walls* It is Possible that not the city walls, but those of a vineyard are meant. Judaea is God’s vineyard (^{<308>}Isaiah 5:1-7), and God permits the enemy to enter the vineyard to destroy her.

Battlements tendrils. The tendrils and branches of Judah’s vine are given up to ruin, but not the stock. See ^{<308>}Isaiah 6:13 note.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:12.** *It is not he* i.e., Who speaks by the prophets.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:13.** *Word* Rather, speaker. Literally, And he who speaketh is not in them, i.e., there is no one who speaketh in them; what the prophets say has no higher authority than themselves.

Thus ... i.e., May the evil which the prophets threaten fall upon their head.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 5:15.** Israel is not put here for the ten tribes, but for the whole house of Jacob, of which Judah was now the representative.

Mighty “permanent, enduring.” The word is the usual epithet of the rocks (^{<022>}Numbers 24:21), and of ever-flowing streams (^{<120>}Deuteronomy 21:4, Hebrew). It describes therefore a nation, whose empire is firm as a rock, and ever rolling onward like a mighty river. The epithet “ancient” refers simply to time.

Whose language thou knowest not This would render them more pitiless, as they would not understand their cries for mercy.

²⁴⁵⁶**Jeremiah 5:16.** *Their quiver* See ²⁴⁶⁹Jeremiah 4:29, note.

²⁴⁵⁷**Jeremiah 5:17.** Or,

It shall eat “thine harvest and thy bread.” They shall eat “thy sons and thy daughters.” It shall eat thy sheep and thy cattle: It shall eat “thy vines and thy fig-trees.”

They shall impoverish ... Or, It shall batter thy “fortified cities, wherein thou” trustest, with weapons of war. There is probably reference here to an instrument like a battering-ram, with which the Assyrians beat down the walls of their enemies.

²⁴⁵⁹**Jeremiah 5:19.** The reason why God so chastises His people. As they in a land especially consecrated to Yahweh had served “strange” (i.e., foreign gods, so shall they in a land belonging to others be the slaves of strangers.

²⁴⁶¹**Jeremiah 5:20-31.** Against the God

(1) of Creation (²⁴⁶²Jeremiah 5:22), and

(2) of Providence (²⁴⁶³Jeremiah 5:24),

they sin, not merely by apostasy, but by a general immorality extending to all classes (²⁴⁶⁵Jeremiah 5:25-28). It is in this immorality that their idolatry has its root.

²⁴⁶⁷**Jeremiah 5:22.** The sea is the symbol of restless and indomitable energy, chafing against all resistance, and dashing to pieces the works whereby man endeavors to restrain its fury. Yet God has imposed upon it laws which it must obey, and keeps it in its appointed place, not by barriers of iron but by a belt of sand. Modern science has shown that the resisting power of sand is enormous. A wave which would shatter rocks fails powerless upon sand.

Can they not prevail The opposite of “thou couldst” (²⁴⁶⁸Jeremiah 3:5). The sea, the mightiest of God’s works, cannot prevail, cannot break God’s laws, because He has not endowed it with free-will. Man, physically impotent, can prevail, because, being made in God’s image, he is free.

Jeremiah 5:23. The heart, or will of the Jews was first “revolting,” literally a will that “drew back” from God, because it disliked His service; and secondly it was “rebellious,” a will that actively resisted Him. Compare Deuteronomy 21:18,20.

Jeremiah 5:24. As God’s Providence addresses itself chiefly to the thoughtful, Jeremiah says in their heart. By the intelligent study of God’s dealings men perceive that they are not merely acts of power but also of love.

The appointed weeks literally, He guardeth, maintaineth, for us the weeks which are the statutes or settled laws “of the harvest.” These were the seven weeks from the Passover to Pentecost, and were as important for the ingathering of the crops as the rainy seasons for their nourishment.

Jeremiah 5:25. It was not that the rains did not fall, or that the harvest weeks were less bright; the good was there, but the wickedness of the community blocked up the channels, through which it should have reached the people. The lawlessness and injustice of the times kept the mass of the people in poverty.

Jeremiah 5:26. Rather, he spieth about like the crouching down of fowlers; they have set the fatal snare; “they catch men.”

Trap literally, “The destroyer;” it was probably a gin, which strangled the birds caught in it.

Jeremiah 5:27. *Deceit* The wealth gained by deceit and fraud.

Jeremiah 5:28. Fatness is admired in the East as a sign of wealth.

They shine This word is used of the sleekness of the skin, soft and smooth as ivory.

They overpass the deeds of the wicked literally, “They have overpassed words of wickedness,” i.e., they go to excess in wickedness.

Yet they prosper Or, that they (the orphans) may prosper, enjoy their rights.

Jeremiah 5:30. Rather, A terrible “and horrible thing” has happened “in the land.”

☞ **Jeremiah 5:31.** *Bear rule by their means* Rather, “The priests” rule at their hands, i.e., govern according to their false prophecies, guidance, and directions.

My people love to have it so False teaching lightens the yoke of God’s Law, and removes His fear from the conscience: and with this, man is ready to be content.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 6

Jeremiah proceeds to unveil the judgment impending upon Jerusalem, and his description of it is divided into five parts, each beginning with the words “Thus saith Jehovah.”

Jeremiah 6:1. Jeremiah addresses the men of Benjamin, either as being his own tribesmen, or as a name appropriate to the people of Jerusalem, which also was situate in the tribe of Benjamin.

Gather yourselves to flee Gather your goods together to remove them to a place of safety.

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa The name of Tekoa is almost identical with the verb “to blow”: but it was not chosen merely for the alliteration, but because it was the last town in Judaea (about 11 miles south of Jerusalem), upon the very border of the desert, where the fugitives would halt.

A sign Rather, a signal.

Beth-haccerem Or, the “Vineyard-House,” which was situated halfway between Jerusalem and Tekoa.

Appareth “Is bending over;” is bending forward in eagerness to seize its prey.

Jeremiah 6:2. The whole verse is difficult, but should probably be translated; “to a pasturage, yea a luxuriant pasturage, have I likened (or, have reduced to silence, i.e., destroyed) the daughter of Zion.”

Jeremiah 6:3.

To it shall come “shepherds with their flocks:” They have pitched upon it “their tents round about:” They have pastured each his hand, “i.e., side.”

The pasture is so abundant that each feeds his flock, i.e., plunders Jerusalem, at the side of his own tent.

Jeremiah 6:4. *Prepare ye war* Rather, Sanctify ye war against her. War in ancient times was never undertaken without religious solemnities

(see ^{<1812>}Deuteronomy 20:2 note). For some of these compare ^{<2121>}Ezekiel 21:21-23.

At noon The mid-day heat is so great in the East as to be usually passed under shelter (^{<1045>}2 Samuel 4:5; ^{<2107>}Song of Solomon 1:7). The morning-march of an army was made fasting, and was usually over by eight or nine. But so great is the impatience of the Chaldeans for the assault that they cry, “we will make the assault at noon!”

Woe unto us! Or,

Alas for us! “for the day” has turned
For the evening shadows are
lengthening!

^{<2185>}**Jeremiah 6:5.**

Up! and we will make the assault “by night!” And destroy “her palaces.”

The generals delay the assault until the next morning. The soldiers consider themselves aggrieved at this, and clamour for a night attack.

^{<2185>}**Jeremiah 6:6.** *Hew ye down trees* Rather, her trees: for the simple purpose of clearing the approaches.

Cast a mount literally, pour: the earth was emptied out of the baskets, in which it was carried to the required spot upon the backs of laborers.

Wholly Or,

“She “is the city” that is visited:

“Wholly oppression” is “in the midst of her!”

She is visited, i.e., punished; she is ripe for punishment.

^{<2185>}**Jeremiah 6:7.** *As a fountain casteth out* Better, As a cistern “cooleth.”

Before me ... Before My face continually there is disease and wounding: Disease as the result of poverty and want: wounding, or, the commission of deeds of actual violence.

^{<2185>}**Jeremiah 6:8.** *Be thou instructed* Be thou chastised: learn the lesson which chastisement is intended to teach thee.

Lest my soul Lest I Myself — not “depart from thee,” God does not willingly leave His people, but — “be torn from thee.”

²⁴⁸⁹**Jeremiah 6:9.** *They ...* Each word indicates the completeness of Judah’s ruin.

Turn back thine hand Addressed perhaps to Nebuchadnezzar as God’s servant (²⁴⁹⁰Jeremiah 25:9). He is required to go over the vine once again, that no grapes may escape.

Into the baskets Better, “upon the tendrils.” While the Jews carried captive to Babylon escaped, misery gleaned the rest again and again.

²⁴⁹⁰**Jeremiah 6:10.** *Give warning* Rather testify.

Reproach They make the Word of God the object of their ridicule.

²⁴⁹¹**Jeremiah 6:11.** Or, But I am filled with “the fury of Yahweh: I am weary with holding” it “in.” Pour it out “upon the children” in the street, and upon the company of youths “together;” for both man and “wife shall be taken;” the older and he whose days are full. With emphatic abruptness Jeremiah bids himself give full utterance to God’s message. And the message is to reach all. Five stages of human life are successively marked out.

²⁴⁹²**Jeremiah 6:12.** *Turned* Violently transferred. Houses, fields, wives, all they most valued, and most jealously kept to themselves — are gone.

²⁴⁹³**Jeremiah 6:13.** *Given to covetousness* literally, everyone has gained gains. The temper of mind which gains the world is not that which gains heaven.

Falsely Rather, “fraudulently.”

²⁴⁹⁴**Jeremiah 6:14.** *Healed* Rather, “tried to heal.”

Of the daughter These words are omitted by a majority of manuscripts, but found in most of the versions.

Slightly literally, “according to,” i.e., as if it were, a “trifle: making nothing” of it. This cry of “peace” was doubtless based upon Josiah’s reforms.

Jeremiah 6:15.

They are brought to shame because they have “committed abomination.” Shame nevertheless they feel not; To blush nevertheless they know not; “Therefore they shall fall among” the falling; “At the time” when “I visit them, they shall” stumble, “saith Yahweh.”

The fact is expressed that their conduct was a disgrace to them, though they did not feel it as such. “Abomination” has its usual meaning of idolatry (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 4:1).

Jeremiah 6:16. The sense is: God’s prophet has declared that a great national calamity is at hand. “Make inquiries; stand in the ways; ask the passers by. Your country was once prosperous and blessed. Try to learn what were the paths trodden in those days which led your ancestors to happiness. Choose them, and walk earnestly therein, and find thereby rest for your souls.” The Christian fathers often contrast Christ the one good way with the old tracks, many in number and narrow to walk in, which are the Law and the prophets.

Jeremiah 6:17. *Watchmen* The prophets (²⁵¹⁸Isaiah 52:8).

The second of the trumpet This was the signal for flight (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 6:1; ³¹⁸⁶Amos 3:6). Similarly the prophet’s warning was to move men to escape from God’s judgments.

Jeremiah 6:18. God summons three witnesses to hear His sentence.

- (1) The Gentiles.
- (2) All mankind, Jews and Gentiles.
- (3) Nature (see ²⁴⁶⁹Jeremiah 6:19).

What is among them Rather, “what happens” in them; i.e., “Know what great things I will do to them.”

Jeremiah 6:19. The fathers understood this to be the decree rejecting the Jews from being the Church.

Jeremiah 6:20. *The sweet cane* The same as the scented cane of ²¹²³Exodus 30:23 (see the note).

Your burnt offerings The rejection of ritual observances is proclaimed by the two prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, who chiefly assisted the two pious kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, in restoring the temple-service. God rejects not the ceremonial service, but the substitution of it for personal holiness and morality. Compare ^{<3152>}1 Samuel 15:22; ^{<3111>}Isaiah 1:11; ^{<3165>}Micah 6:6-8.

^{<3162>}**Jeremiah 6:21.**

“Behold,” I give unto “this people” causes of stumbling, And they shall stumble against them: fathers and sons together, “the neighbor and his friend shall perish.”

This is the natural consequence of their conduct. Their service of Yahweh was a systematic hypocrisy: how then could they walk uprightly with their fellow-men? When God lays stumblingblocks in men’s way, it is by the general action of His moral law (^{<3113>}James 1:13,14), by which willful sin in one point reacts upon the whole moral nature (^{<3120>}James 2:10).

^{<3162>}**Jeremiah 6:22.** *Raised* Or, awakened, to undertake distant expeditions.

The sides of the earth Or ends, the most distant regions (see ^{<3152>}Jeremiah 25:32).

^{<3162>}**Jeremiah 6:23.** *Spear* Properly, a javelin for hurling at the enemy (see ^{<3176>}1 Samuel 17:6 note): an ordinary weapon of the Babylonians.

Cruel ruthless, inhuman. In the Assyrian monuments warriors put the vanquished to death; rows of impaled victims hang round the walls of the besieged towns; and men collect in heaps hands cut from the vanquished.

Horses, set in array A full stop should be put after horses. It — the whole army, and not the cavalry only — is “set in array.”

As men for war against thee Rather, as a warrior for battle “against thee.”

^{<3162>}**Jeremiah 6:24.** The effect upon the Jewish people of the news of Nebuchadnezzar’s approach.

Wax feeble Are relaxed. It is the opposite of what is said in ^{<3162>}Jeremiah 6:23 of the enemy, “They lay hold etc.” Terror makes the hands of the Jews hold their weapons with nerveless grasp.

²⁴⁶⁵**Jeremiah 6:25.** *For the sword of the enemy* literally, “for to the enemy a sword; i.e., for the enemy is armed,” he has a commission from God to execute judgment. See ²⁴²²Jeremiah 12:12; ²³⁰⁵Isaiah 10:5, and ⁴⁹⁷³Psalms 17:13 note.

Fear is on every side Magor-Missabib, Jeremiah’s watchword (compare ²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 20:3,10). The “and” before it should be omitted.

²⁴⁶⁵**Jeremiah 6:26.** *Wallow thyself in ashes* Violent distress is accustomed to find relief in eccentric actions, and thus the wallowing in ashes shows that Jerusalem’s grief is unbearable.

The spoiler Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁴⁶⁷**Jeremiah 6:27ff.** Render it:

I have set thee among My people as a prover of ore, And thou shalt know and try their way. They are all of them rebels of rebels (i.e., utter rebels): Slander-walkers, were copper and iron, Corrupters all of them. The bellows glow: from their fire lead only! In vain hath the smelter smelted, And the wicked are not separated. Refuse-silver have men called them: For Yahweh hath refused them.

The intermixture throughout of moral words and metallurgical terms is remarkable.

²⁴⁶⁹**Jeremiah 6:29.** *The bellows are burned* Worn out by continual blowing. The prophet has exhausted all his efforts. His heart, consumed by the heat of divine inspiration, can labor no more. Others translate “The bellows snort,” i.e., blow furiously. More probably, “The bellows glow” with the strong heat of the fire.

Plucked away Separated. The smelter’s object is to separate the metal from the dross.

²⁴⁶⁹**Jeremiah 6:30.** *Reprobate* See the margin; not really silver, but the dross.

The LORD hath rejected them This then is the end. The smelter is God’s prophet: the bellows the breath of inspiration: the flux his earnestness in preaching. But in vain does the fervour of prophecy essay to melt the hearts of the people. They are so utterly corrupt, that no particle even of

pure metal can be found in them. All the refiner's art is in vain. They have rejected all God's gifts and motives for their repentance, and therefore Yahweh has rejected them as an alloy too utterly adulterate to repay the refiner's toil.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 7

In Jeremiah 7—10 he addresses the people as they flocked into Jerusalem from the country, to attend the solemn services in the temple upon a fastday. Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 26) had just ascended the throne, and was so incensed at this sermon that he would have put Jeremiah to death but for the influence of Ahikam. With the accession of Jehoiakim all hope of averting the ruin of the country had passed away. He represented the reverse of his father's policy, and belonged to that faction, who placed their sole hope of deliverance in a close alliance with Pharaoh-Necho. As this party rejected the distinctive principles of the theocracy, and the king was personally an irreligious man, the maintenance of the worship of Yahweh was no longer an object of the public care. At this time upon a public fast-day, appointed probably because of the calamities under which the nation was laboring, Jeremiah was commanded by Yahweh to stand at the gate of the temple, and address to the people as they entered words of solemn warning. The whole sermon divides itself into three parts;

- (1) It points out the folly of the superstitious confidence placed by the people in the temple, while they neglect the sole sure foundation of a nation's hope. A sanctuary long polluted by immorality must inevitably be destroyed (²⁴⁷⁰Jeremiah 7:2—8:3).
- (2) Complaints follow of a more general character, in which the growing wickedness of the nation and especially of the leaders is pointed out (²⁴⁸⁸Jeremiah 8:4—9:24).
- (3) Lastly the prophet shows the possibility of averting the evils impending upon the nation (²⁴⁹⁵Jeremiah 9:25—10:25).

²⁴⁷⁰**Jeremiah 7:1,2.** The temple had several entrances (²⁴⁴⁹2 Chronicles 4:9); and the gate or door here mentioned is probably that of the inner court, where Baruch read Jeremiah's scroll (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 36:10). The prophet stood in the doorway, and addressed the people assembled in the outer court.

All ye of Judah Better, literally all Judah (compare ²⁴⁶⁰Jeremiah 26:2).

^{<247B>}**Jeremiah 7:3.** If the people repented, instead of being led into captivity, God would maintain their national existence. It is a promise of the continuance of an old blessing.

^{<247B>}**Jeremiah 7:4.** *The temple of the LORD* Thrice repeated, to emphasize the rejection of the cry ever upon the lips of the false prophets. In their view the maintenance of the temple-service was a charm sufficient to avert all evil.

These The buildings of the temple, to which Jeremiah is supposed to point. The Jews put their trust in the material buildings.

^{<247B>}**Jeremiah 7:5-7.** A summary of the conditions indispensable on man's part, before he can plead the terms of the covenant in his favor.

^{<247B>}**Jeremiah 7:6.** *In this place* i.e., in Jerusalem. The prophet refers to innocent blood shed there judicially. Of one such judicial murder Jehoiakim had already been guilty (^{<245B>}Jeremiah 26:23).

^{<247B>}**Jeremiah 7:7.** Why then do not the Jews still possess a land thus eternally given them? Because God never bestows anything unconditionally. The land was bestowed upon them by virtue of a covenant (^{<017B>}Genesis 17:7); the Jews had broken the conditions of this covenant (^{<247B>}Jeremiah 7:5,6), and the gift reverted to the original donor.

^{<247D>}**Jeremiah 7:10.** *We are delivered* Jeremiah accuses them of trusting in the ceremonial of the temple instead of leading holy lives. "You break," he says, "the Ten Commandments, and then you go to the Temple; and when the service is over you say, We are delivered. We have atoned for our past actions, and may start afresh with easy minds upon a new course of wickedness."

^{<247D>}**Jeremiah 7:11.** *Robbers* literally, tearers, those who rob with violence. The temple was the place which sheltered them. It had been consecrated to God. Now that it harbors miscreants, must it not as inevitably be destroyed as a den of robbers would be by any righteous ruler?

^{<247D>}**Jeremiah 7:12.** *Go ye unto my place in Shiloh* This argument roused the indignation of the people (^{<248B>}Jeremiah 26:8,9,11). The ark, Jeremiah shows, had not always been at Jerusalem. The place first chosen, as the

center of the nation's worship, was Shiloh, a town to the north of Bethel, situated in the powerful tribe of Ephraim (^{<1681>}Joshua 18:1 note). The ruin of Shiloh is ascribed (^{<1978>}Psalm 78:58-64) to the idolatry which prevailed in Israel after the death of Joshua; a similar ruin due to similar causes should fall on Jerusalem (^{<2474>}Jeremiah 7:14). The site of Shiloh is identified with Seilun, the ruins of which are so insignificant as to bear out Jerome's remark, "At Silo, where once was the tabernacle and ark of the Lord, there can scarcely be pointed out the foundation of an altar."

At the first In the first stage, the first period of the existence of the Jewish commonwealth, Shiloh was to the Judges what Jerusalem subsequently was to the kings; and as the fall of Shiloh through the wickedness of Eli's sons marked the period when the government by Judges was to pass away, and the second stage begin; so the power of the kings perished at the fall of Jerusalem, and left the way clear for the third stage of Jewish polity, government by the scribes.

^{<2473>}**Jeremiah 7:13.** *Rising up early and speaking* A proverbial expression for "speaking zealously and earnestly." It is used only by Jeremiah.

^{<2475>}**Jeremiah 7:15.** *The whole seed of Ephraim* i.e., the whole of the nine northern tribes. Their casting out was a plain proof that the possession of the symbols of God's presence does not secure a Church or nation from rejection, if unworthy of its privileges.

^{<2476>}**Jeremiah 7:16.** They had reached that stage in which men sin without any sense of guilt (see ^{<11516>}1 John 5:16).

Neither make intercession to me In ^{<2447>}Jeremiah 14:7-9 we have an intercessory prayer offered by Jeremiah, but not heard. The intercession of Moses prevailed with God (^{<14112>}Numbers 11:2; 14:13-20; 16:22), because the progress of the people then wins upward; the progress now was from bad to worse, and therefore in ^{<24510>}Jeremiah 15:1 we read that the intercession even of Moses and Samuel (see ^{<19122>}1 Samuel 12:23) would profit nothing.

^{<2477>}**Jeremiah 7:17.** The proof of the hopeless immorality of the people is this, that they worship pagan deities

(1) generally in the cities of Judah, and not in the capital only; and

(2) publicly in the streets of Jerusalem. Such public idolatry could have been practiced only in the reign of a king like Jehoiakim.

^{<2478>}**Jeremiah 7:18.** *Children ... fathers ... women* All members of the family take part in this idolatry.

Cakes Probably very similar to those offered at Athens to Artemis.

To the queen of heaven A Persian and Assyrian deity, who was supposed to symbolize a quality possessed by moonlight of giving to nature its receptive power, as the sun represented its quickening power. The moon thus became generally the symbol of female productiveness, and was worshipped as such at Babylon. Disgraceful usages to which every woman was obliged once to submit formed part of her worship.

^{<2479>}**Jeremiah 7:19.** *Do they not provoke ...* literally, Is it not themselves (“that they provoke”) to the shame of their faces?

^{<2472>}**Jeremiah 7:20.** *Upon man, and upon beast* All creation in some mysterious way shares in man’s fall and restoration (^{<6189>}Romans 8:19-22).

^{<2472>}**Jeremiah 7:21.** The meaning is, Increase your sacrifices as you will. Acid burnt-offering to peace-offerings. All is in vain as long as you neglect the indispensable requirements of obedience and moral purity. Eat flesh is equivalent to sacrifice. The flesh of animals offered in sacrifice was usually eaten by the offerers, and this meal was regarded as a symbol of reconciliation. God and man partook of the same victim, and so were made friends. This passage (^{<2472>}Jeremiah 7:21-28) is the Haphtarah (lesson) from the prophets, after the Parashah, Leviticus 6—8, or Lesson from the Law. The selection of such a Haphtarah shows that the Jews thoroughly understood that their sacrifices were not the end of the Law, but a means for spiritual instruction.

^{<2472>}**Jeremiah 7:23.** *Obey ...* These words are not found verbatim in the Pentateuch, but are a summary of its principles. Sacrifice is never the final cause of the covenant, but always obedience (^{<1295>}Exodus 19:5,6; ^{<6145>}Leviticus 11:45. Compare Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 11, in which the moral object of the Mosaic dispensation is most clearly taught). In connection with Jeremiah’s argument, notice that ^{<3155>}Amos 5:25 (taken in conjunction with ^{<6182>}Joshua 5:2-7) proves that the ceremonial law was not observed during the 40 years’ wandering in the wilderness. A thing so long

in abeyance in the very time of its founder, could not be of primary importance.

^{<3072>}**Jeremiah 7:24.** *Imagination* Better, as in the margin.

And went backward literally, as in the margin; i.e., they turned their back upon Me to follow their own devices.

^{<3073>}**Jeremiah 7:27.** Rather, Though thou ... yet etc.

^{<3078>}**Jeremiah 7:28.** *A nation* The “nation.” Israel holds so unique a position among all nations that for it to disobey God is marvelous.

Truth ... Fidelity to God. Though they have the name of Yahweh often upon their lips and swear by Him (^{<2482>}Jeremiah 5:2), yet it is only profession without practice.

^{<3079>}**Jeremiah 7:29-33.** Jeremiah summons the people to lament over the miserable consequences of their rejection of God. In the valley of Hinnom, where lately they offered their innocents, they shall themselves fall before the enemy in such multitudes that burial shall be impossible, and the beasts of the field unmolested shall prey upon their remains.

^{<3079>}**Jeremiah 7:29.** The daughter of Zion, defiled by the presence of enemies in her sanctuary, and rejected of God, must shear off the diadem of her hair, the symbol of her consecration to God, just as the Nazarite, when defiled by contact with a corpse, was to shave his crowned head.

Take up a lamentation ... Or, lift up a “lamentation on the bare hill-sides” (^{<2482>}Jeremiah 3:2).

^{<3073>}**Jeremiah 7:30.** *They have set their abominations ...* Probably a reference to the reign of the fanatic Manasseh, in whose time the worship of Astarte and of the heavenly bodies was the established religion of the land (^{<1220B>}2 Kings 21:3-5), and even the temple was used for idolatrous services. The people had never heartily accepted Josiah’s reformation.

^{<3073>}**Jeremiah 7:31.** *The high places* Here, probably, not natural hills, but artificial mounts, on which the altars were erected.

Tophet (marginal reference note) is not here a proper name; as applied to Baal-worship the term is not an ordinary one, but almost unique to Jeremiah. Comparing this verse with ^{<2491B>}Jeremiah 19:5; 32:35, it will be

found that Baal is in those passages substituted for Tophet. Just as it is the practice of the prophets to substitute “Bosheth, shame,” for Baal (see ^{<2492>}Jeremiah 3:24), so here Jeremiah uses “Tophet, an object of abhorrence” (compare ^{<3876>}Job 17:6 note), in just the same way.

Valley of the son of Hinnom See ^{<6538>}Joshua 15:8 note.

To burn ... The children were not burned alive, but slain first (^{<3562>}Ezekiel 16:21).

^{<2473>}**Jeremiah 7:32.** *The valley of slaughter* Where they killed their helpless children, there shall they be slaughtered helplessly by their enemies.

Till there be no place Rather, for want of room elsewhere.

^{<2473>}**Jeremiah 7:34.** Silence and desolation are to settle upon the whole land.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 8

Jeremiah 8:1. Not the living only but the dead shall be exposed to the ruthless violence of the enemy, who will ransack the graves of the wealthier classes.

Jeremiah 8:2. *Loved ... served ... walked ... sought ... worshipped* There is great force in the piled-up verbs by which their worship of the heavenly bodies is described. The prophet beginning with the heart's "love" describes that worship) in the various stages of its development, and then contrasts its fulness with the miserable reward which ensues.

Jeremiah 8:3. *This evil family* The whole Jewish race.

Which remain The words are omitted by the Septuagint and Syriac versions.

Jeremiah 8:4. The prophet here resumes from **Jeremiah 7:28** the main subject of his prophecy. He again invites the Jews to repentance.

Shall they fall? The argument is that when men fall, they do not lie upon the ground, but endeavor to get up again: and when a man loses his way, he does not persist in going on, but turns round, and retraces his steps. Israel then will be only following the dictates of common sense in desisting from that which she now knows to be her ruin.

Jeremiah 8:5. When men act as in **Jeremiah 8:4**, why is God's own people alone an exception?

Slidden back ... backsliding The same words as "turn" and "return" in **Jeremiah 8:4**. They should be rendered, "Why doth this people of Jerusalem turn away with a perpetual turning?"

Deceit i.e., idolatry; because men worship in it that which is false, and it is false to the worshippers.

Refuse From a feeling of dislike.

Jeremiah 8:6. *I hearkened and heard* God, before passing sentence, carefully listens to the words of the people. Compare **Genesis 11:5**,

where the divine judgment is preceded by the Almighty going down to see the tower.

Not aright Or, “not-right;” which in the Hebrew idiom means that which is utterly wrong.

No man repented The original phrase is very striking: No “man had pity upon his own wickedness.” If men understood the true nature of sin, the sinner would repent out of very pity upon himself.

As the horse rusheth literally, “overfloweth.” It is a double metaphor; first, the persistence of the people in sin is compared to the fury which at the sound of the trumpet seizes upon the war-horse; and then its rush into the battle is likened to the overflowing of a torrent, which nothing can stop in its destructive course.

²⁴⁸⁸**Jeremiah 8:7.** Jeremiah appeals to the obedience which migratory birds render to the law of their natures. The “stork” arrives in Palestine about March 21, and after a six weeks’ halt departs for the north of Europe. It takes its flight by day, at a vast height in the air (“in the heaven”). The appearance of the “turtle-dove” is one of the pleasant signs of the approach of spring.

The crane and the swallow Rather, “the swift and the crane.”

²⁴⁸⁹**Jeremiah 8:8.** *The law of the LORD* The “Torah,” or written law, the possession of which made the priests and prophets so boastfully exclaim, “We are wise.”

Lo, certainly ... Rather, Verily, lo! the lying pen “of the scribes” hath made it — the Law — into a lie. The mention of “scribes” in this place is a crucial point in the argument whether or not the Pentateuch or Torah is the old law-book of the Jews, or a fabrication which gradually grew up, but was not received as authoritative until after the return from the captivity. It is not until the time of Josiah (²⁴⁹³2 Chronicles 34:13) that “scribes” are mentioned except as political officers; here, however, they are students of the Torah. The Torah must have existed in writing before there could have been an order of men whose special business it was to study it; and therefore to explain this verse by saying that perhaps the scribes were writers of false prophecies written in imitation of the true, is to lose the whole gist of the passage. What the scribes turned into a lie was that Law of which they had just boasted that they were the possessors. Moreover,

the scribes undeniably became possessed of preponderating influence during the exile: and on the return from Babylon were powerful enough to prevent the restoration of the kingly office. That there should be along with the priests and Levites men who devoted themselves to the study of the written Law, and who in the time of Josiah had acquired such influence as to be recognized as a distinct class — is just what we should expect from the rapid progress of learning, which began with Elisha's active management of the schools of the prophets, and culminated in the days of Hezekiah. Jeremiah's whole argument depends upon the fact that there were in his days men who claimed to be "wise" or "learned" men because of their study of the Pentateuch, and is entirely inconsistent with the assumptions that Jeremiah wrote the book of Deuteronomy, and that Ezra wrote parts of Exodus and the whole of Leviticus.

~~2489~~ **Jeremiah 8:9.** *They have rejected the word of the LORD* It became in the hands of the Soferim or scribes a mere code of ceremonial observance. Compare ~~4073~~ Mark 7:13.

~~2480~~ **Jeremiah 8:10-12.** These verses are almost identical with ~~2462~~ Jeremiah 6:12-15.

~~2483~~ **Jeremiah 8:10.** *To them that shall inherit them* Rather, "to those that shall take possession of them, i.e., "to conquerors who shall take them by force.

~~2483~~ **Jeremiah 8:13.** Or, "I will gather and sweep them away, saith Jehovah: there are no grapes on the vine, and no figs on the fig-tree, and the leaf is dry: therefore will I appoint those that shall pass over them." Judah is a vine which bears no fruit: a tree which makes even no profession of life, for her leaf is dry. Many explain the last words of an army sweeping over the land like a flood.

~~2484~~ **Jeremiah 8:14.** The people rouse one another to exertion. "Why," they ask, "do we remain here to be overwhelmed?" They are ready now to follow the command given (see the marginal reference), but with the conviction that all hope is over.

Let us be silent there Rather, let us perish there, literally "be put to silence."

Water of gall i.e., poison. The word rendered “gall” was probably the belladonna, or night-shade, to the “berries” of which the grapes of Israel were compared.

²⁴⁸⁵**Jeremiah 8:15.** *Health ... trouble* Or, “rest ... terror.”

²⁴⁸⁶**Jeremiah 8:16.** *Dan* i.e. the northern boundary of the land.

His strong ones i.e., “his war-horses.”

²⁴⁸⁷**Jeremiah 8:17.** *I will send* Or, am sending. No prophet changes his metaphors so suddenly as Jeremiah. The invading army is now compared to snakes, whom no charming can soothe, and whose bite is fatal. Compare ²⁴²⁵Numbers 21:5,6.

Cockatrices “Vipers.” See ²³¹⁸Isaiah 11:8 note.

²⁴⁸⁸**Jeremiah 8:18.** Rather, “O my comfort in sorrow: my heart faints for me.” The word translated “comfort” is by some supposed to be corrupt. With these mournful ejaculations a new strophe begins, ending with ²⁴⁹¹Jeremiah 9:1, in which the prophet mourns over the miserable fate of his countrymen, among whom he had been earnestly laboring, but all in vain.

²⁴⁸⁹**Jeremiah 8:19.** Or, “Behold the voice of the cry for help of the daughter of my people from a distant land: Is not Yahweh in Zion? Is not her king there? Why have they provoked Me to anger with their carved images, with foreign vanities?” Their complaint, “Is there no Jehovah in Zion?” is met by God demanding of them the reason why instead of worshipping Him they have set up idols.

²⁴⁹⁰**Jeremiah 8:20.** *The summer* Rather, the fruit-gathering, which follows the grain-harvest. The grain has failed; the fruit-gathering has also proved unproductive; so despair seized the people when they saw opportunities for their deliverance again and again pass by, until God seemed utterly to have forgotten them.

²⁴⁹²**Jeremiah 8:21.** *For the hurt ... hurt* literally, “Because of the breaking ... broken.” These are the words of the prophet, whose heart is crushed by the cry of his countrymen.

I am black Or, I go mourning.

~~3482~~ **Jeremiah 8:22.** *No physician there* i.e., in Gilead. Balm used to grow in Israel for the healing of the nations. Her priests and prophets were the physicians. Has Israel then no balm for herself? Is there no physician in her who can bind up her wound? Gilead was to Israel what Israel spiritually was to the whole world.

Why then is not the health ... recovered? Or, “why then has no bandage,” or plaster of balsam, “been laid upon my people?”

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 9

Jeremiah 9:1. This verse is joined in the Hebrew to the preceding chapter. But any break at all here interrupts the meaning.

A fountain Rather, “a reservoir,” in which tears had been stored up, so that the prophet might weep abundantly.

Jeremiah 9:2-9. From their punishment the prophet now turns to their sins.

Jeremiah 9:2. The prophet utters the wish that he might be spared his daily striving, and in some lone wilderness give way to his sorrow, without restraint.

A lodging place It was usual to build in the desert, either by private charity or at the public expense, caravans era is, to receive travelers for a single night, who had however to bring their own supplies with them.

An assembly Or, a gang.

Treacherous Faithless toward one another.

Jeremiah 9:3. Rather, “And they bend their tongue to be their bow of lies, i.e.” just as men before a battle get their bows ready, so they of set purpose make ready to do mischief, only their arrows are lying words: “neither do they rule faithfully in the land, i.e.” Judaea.

Jeremiah 9:4. In a state of such utter lawlessness, the bonds of mutual confidence are relaxed, and suspicion takes its place.

Utterly supplant An allusion to the name of Jacob (⁰¹²⁷³⁶Genesis 27:36). It might be rendered, “every brother is a thorough Jacob.”

Will walk with slanders Or, slandereth.

Jeremiah 9:6. A continuation of the warning given in ²¹⁰⁰⁴Jeremiah 9:4. “Trust no one: for thou dwellest surrounded by deceit on every side.” Their rejection of God is the result of their want of honesty in their dealings with one another (⁰¹⁰⁴¹1 John 4:20).

²⁴⁹⁷**Jeremiah 9:7.** *I will melt them, and try them* The punishment is corrective rather than retributive. The terms used are those of the refiner of metals, the first being the smelting to separate the pure metal from the ore; the second the testing to see whether the metal is pure, or still mixed with alloy. God will put the nation into the crucible of tribulation, that whatever is evil being consumed in the fire, all there is in them of good may be purified.

For how shall I do ... Rather, “for how” else could I act with reference to the “daughter of my people?”

²⁴⁹⁸**Jeremiah 9:8.** *An arrow shot out* Rather, “a murderous arrow.”

In heart he layeth his wait Rather, “inwardly he layeth his ambush.”

²⁴⁹⁹**Jeremiah 9:10-22.** The punishment described in general terms in the preceding three verses is now detailed at great length.

²⁵⁰⁰**Jeremiah 9:10.** *The habitations i.e* the temporary encampments of the shepherds (see ²⁴⁹⁸Jeremiah 6:3).

So that none can ... Or, “They are parched up, with no man to pass through them; neither do they hear the voice of cattle; from the birds of the heaven even to the beasts they “are fled, they are gone.”

²⁵⁰¹**Jeremiah 9:11.** *Dragons* Rather, jackals.

²⁵⁰²**Jeremiah 9:12.** *For what the land perisheth ...* This is the question proposed for consideration. The prophet calls upon the wise man to explain his question; that question being, Wherefore did the land perish? He follows it by the assertion of a fact: “It is parched like the wilderness with no man to pass through.”

²⁵⁰³**Jeremiah 9:13.** The cause of the chastisement about to fall upon Jerusalem, was their desertion of the divine Law.

²⁵⁰⁴**Jeremiah 9:14.** *Imagination* Or, as in the margin.

Which their fathers taught them It was not the sin of one generation that brought upon them chastisement: it was a sin, which had been handed down from father to son.

^{<2495>}**Jeremiah 9:15.** *I will feed them ...* Rather, I am feeding them. The present participle used here, followed by three verbs in the future, shows that the judgment has begun, of which the successive stages are given in the next clause.

Wormwood See ^{<1528>}Deuteronomy 29:18, note, and for “water of gall,” ^{<2484>}Jeremiah 8:14, note.

^{<2496>}**Jeremiah 9:16.** This verse is taken from ^{<1853>}Leviticus 26:33. The fulfillment of what had been so long before appointed as the penalty for the violation of Yahweh’s covenant is one of the most remarkable proofs that prophecy was something more than human foresight.

Till I have consumed them See ^{<2497>}Jeremiah 4:27 note. How is this “consuming” consistent with the promise to the contrary there given? Because it is limited by the terms of ^{<2497>}Jeremiah 9:7. Previously to Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of Jerusalem God removed into safety those in whom the nation should revive.

^{<2497>}**Jeremiah 9:17.** *The mourning women* Hired to attend at funerals, and by their skilled wailings aid the real mourners in giving vent to their grief. Hence, they are called “cunning,” literally “wise” women, wisdom being constantly used in Scripture for anything in which people are trained.

^{<2498>}**Jeremiah 9:18.** *Take up a wailing for us* i.e., for the nation once God’s chosen people, but long spiritually dead.

^{<2499>}**Jeremiah 9:19.** *Forsaken* Or, left: forced to abandon the land.

Because our dwellings ... Rather, “because they have east down our dwellings.” The whole verse is a description of their sufferings. See ^{<1251>}2 Kings 25:1-12.

^{<2499>}**Jeremiah 9:20.** The command is addressed to the women because it was more especially their part to express the general feelings of the nation. See ^{<0986>}1 Samuel 18:6; ^{<1024>}2 Samuel 1:24. The women utter now the death-wail over the perishing nation. They are to teach their daughters and neighbors the “lamentation, i.e., dirge,” because the harvest of death would be so large that the number of trained women would not suffice.

Jeremiah 9:21. *Death is come up ...* i.e., death steals silently like a thief upon his victims, and makes such havoc that there are no children left to go “without,” nor young men to frequent the open spaces in the city.

Jeremiah 9:22. The “handful” means the little bundle of grain which the reaper gathers on his arm with three or four strokes of his sickle, and then lays down. Behind the reaper came one whose business it was to gather several of these bundles, and bind them into a sheaf. Thus, death strews the ground with corpses as thickly as these handfuls lie upon the reaped land, but the corpses lie there unheeded.

Jeremiah 9:23. To the end of Jeremiah 10 the prophet urges upon the people the practical conclusion to be drawn from God’s righteous dealings with them. The three things on which men most pride themselves are shown in this verse to have proved vain.

Jeremiah 9:24. This is the prophet’s remedy for the healing of the nation. It is the true understanding and knowledge of God, of which the first means the spiritual enlightenment of the mind (⁴⁰²³1 Corinthians 2:13,14), the other the training of the heart unto obedience (⁴⁰⁸³John 8:31,32). This knowledge of God is further said to find in Him three chief attributes,

- (1) “lovingkindness,” i.e., readiness to show grace and mercy;
- (2) “judgment,” a belief in which is declared in ⁸¹⁰⁶Hebrews 11:6 to be essential to faith;
- (3) “righteousness,” which is essential to religion absolutely.

Unless men believe that God’s dealings with them in life and death are right and just, they can neither love nor reverence him.

Jeremiah 9:25. *All them which are circumcised ...* Rather, “all circumcised in uncircumcision,” i.e., all who though outwardly circumcised have no corresponding inward purity.

Jeremiah 9:26. *All that are in the utmost corners* Really, all who have the corners of their hair shorn. The people meant are those Arabs who cut the hair close upon the forehead and temples, but let it grow long behind. See ⁴⁰⁹²⁷Leviticus 19:27.

For all these nations are uncircumcised Or, “for all the pagan are uncircumcised.” circumcision probably prevailed partially in the pagan mysteries as a sign of special sanctity, but to the Jews alone it represented their covenant-relation to God.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 10

^{<2400>}**Jeremiah 10:2.** *Signs of heaven* Extraordinary appearances, such as eclipses, comets, and the like, which seemed to the pagan to portend national calamities. To attribute importance to them is to walk in pagan ways.

^{<2400>}**Jeremiah 10:3.** *The customs* Better, as the marg, “the ordinances,” established institutions, “of the peoples, i.e.” pagan nations.

^{<2400>}**Jeremiah 10:4.** *They deck it* It was covered with plates of gold and silver, and then fastened with nails in its place, that it might not “more, i.e.” tumble down.

The agreement in this and the following verses with the argument in Isaiah 40—44 is so manifest, that no one can doubt that the one is modelled upon the other. If, therefore, Jeremiah took the thoughts and phrases from Isaiah, it is plain that the last 27 chapters of Isaiah were prior in date to Jeremiah’s time, and were not therefore written at the close of the Babylonian exile. This passage then is a crucial one to the pseudo-Isaiah theory. Two answers are attempted,

- (1) that the pseudo-Isaiah borrowed from Jeremiah. But this is refuted by the style, which is not that usual with Jeremiah.
- (2) That it is an interpolation in Jeremiah.

But how then are we to account for its being found in the Septuagint Version? The only argument of real importance is that these verses break the continuity of thought; but the whole chapter is somewhat fragmentary, and not so closely connected as the previous three. Still there is a connection. The prophet had just included all Israel under the ban of uncircumcision: he now shows them their last chance of safety by enlarging upon the truth, that (compare ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 9:23,24) their true glory is their God, not an idol of wood, but the King of nations. Then comes the sad feeling that they have rejected God and chosen idols (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 10:17,18); then the nation’s deep grief (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 10:19-22) and earnest prayer (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 10:23-25). It is quite possible that only portions of the concluding part of Jeremiah’s temple sermon were embodied in Baruch’s

scroll, and that had the whole been preserved, we should have found the thoughts as orderly in development as those in Jeremiah 7—9.

^{<24015>}**Jeremiah 10:5.** *They are upright ...* Rather, “They are like a palm tree of turned work, i.e.” like one of those stiff inelegant pillars, something like a palm tree, which may be seen in oriental architecture. Some translate thus: “They are like pillar’s in a garden of cucumbers, i.e.” like the blocks set up to frighten away the birds; but none of the ancient versions support this rendering.

^{<24016>}**Jeremiah 10:6.** *For as much as* Or, “No one is like unto thee, O Jehovah.” In ^{<24016>}Jeremiah 10:6-11, the prophet contrasts God’s greatness with the impotence of idols.

^{<24017>}**Jeremiah 10:7.** *O King of nations* i.e., pagan nations. Yahweh is not the national God of the Jews only, but He reigns over all mankind (^{<10228>}Psalms 22:28).

It i.e., everything.

In all their kingdoms More correctly, “in all their royalty or kingship.”

^{<24018>}**Jeremiah 10:8.** *Brutish* (^{<24018>}Jeremiah 10:21) *and foolish* Theirs was the brutishness of men in a savage state, little better than mere animals: their folly that of stupidity.

The stock ... Rather, the instruction of idols is a piece of wood. That is what they are themselves, and “ex nihilo nihil fit” (from nothingness, nothing is made).

^{<24019>}**Jeremiah 10:9.** Or, “It is a piece of wood (^{<24019>}Jeremiah 10:8 note); yea, beaten silver it is, which is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz: it is the work etc.”

Tarshish ... Uphaz See the marginal reference and ^{<01004>}Genesis 10:4. Possibly Uphaz was a place in the neighborhood of the River Hyphasis.

Blue and purple Both colors were purple, from dyes obtained from shellfish: but the former had a violet, the latter a red tinge.

^{<24011>}**Jeremiah 10:11.** This verse is (in the original) in Chaldee. It was probably a proverbial saying, which Jeremiah inserts in its popular form.

²⁴⁰⁰²**Jeremiah 10:12.** *Discretion* Or, understanding. The three attributes ascribed to the Creator are very remarkable. The creation of the earth, the material world, is an act of “power;” the “establishing,” i.e., the ordering and arranging it as a place fit for man’s abode, is the work of his “wisdom;” while the spreading out the heavens over it like a tent is an act of “understanding,” or skill. Naturally, the consideration of these attributes has led many to see here an allusion to the Holy Trinity.

²⁴⁰⁰³**Jeremiah 10:13.** *When ...* i.e., the rushing downpour of rain follows immediately upon the thunder. The rest of the verse is identical with marginal reference; but probably the words belong to Jeremiah, the Psalm being of comparatively late date.

With rain For the rain (²⁴⁰⁰⁷Psalm 135:7).

²⁴⁰⁰⁴**Jeremiah 10:14.** *In his knowledge* Rather, “without knowledge; i.e., on comparing his powerless idols with the terrific grandeur of a tropical thunderstorm the man who can still worship them instead of the Creator is destitute of knowledge.

Every founder ... Or, “every goldsmith is put to shame etc.” He has exhausted his skill on what remains an image.

²⁴⁰⁰⁵**Jeremiah 10:15.** Rather, “They are vanity, a work of mockery,” deserving only ridicule and contempt.

²⁴⁰⁰⁶**Jeremiah 10:16.** *The portion, of Jacob* i.e., Yahweh. He is not like gods made by a carpenter and goldsmith.

Of all things literally, of the all, the universe.

The rod of his inheritance See ²⁴⁰¹²Psalm 74:2; compare ²⁴⁰¹⁷Isaiah 63:17. The rod is the scepter, and Israel the people over whom Yahweh especially rules.

²⁴⁰⁰⁷**Jeremiah 10:17.** The prophet now returns to the main subject of his sermon, the conquest of Judaea.

Thy wares Rather, thy bundle, which could contain a few articles for necessary use, and be carried in the hand. They are going into exile.

O inhabitant of the fortress i.e., thou that art besieged, that inhabitest a besieged town.

^{<2408>}**Jeremiah 10:18.** *Sling out* A similar metaphor for violent ejection occurs in ^{<2228>}Isaiah 22:18 (see the note).

At this once Or, “at this time.” Previous invasions had ended either in deliverance, or at most in temporary misfortune. God’s long-suffering is exhausted, and this time Judaea must cease to be an independent nation.

That they may find it so Omit “so,” and explain either

- (1) “I will distress them” with the rigors of a siege “that they may feel it, i.e., the distress; or,
- (2) “that they may find” Me, God, that which alone is worth finding.

^{<2409>}**Jeremiah 10:19-25.** The lamentation of the daughter of Zion, the Jewish Church, at the devastation of the land, and her humble prayer to God for mercy.

^{<2409>}**Jeremiah 10:19.** *Grievous* Rather, “mortal,” i.e., fatal, incurable.

A grief Or, “my grief.”

^{<2410>}**Jeremiah 10:20.** *tabernacle* i.e., “tent.” Jerusalem laments that her tent is plundered and her children carried into exile, and so “are not,” are dead (^{<4128>}Matthew 2:18), either absolutely, or dead to her in the remote land of their captivity. They can aid the widowed mother no longer in pitching her tent, or in hanging up the curtains round about it.

^{<2410>}**Jeremiah 10:21.** *Therefore they shall not prosper* Rather, “therefore they have not governed wisely.” “The pastors,” i.e., the kings and rulers (^{<2418>}Jeremiah 2:8), having sunk to the condition of barbarous and untutored men, could not govern wisely.

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 10:22.** The “great commotion” is the confused noise of the army on its march (see ^{<2416>}Jeremiah 8:16).

Dragons i.e., jackals; see the marginal reference.

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 10:23.** At the rumour of the enemy’s approach Jeremiah utters in the name of the nation a supplication appropriate to men overtaken by the divine justice.

Jeremiah 10:24. *With judgment* In ^{<2811>}Jeremiah 30:11; 46:28, the word “judgment” (with a different preposition) is rendered “in measure.” The contrast therefore is between punishment inflicted in anger, and that inflicted as a duty of justice, of which the object is the criminal’s reformation. Jeremiah prays that God would punish Jacob so far only as would bring him to true repentance, but that he would pour forth his anger upon the pagan, as upon that which opposes itself to God (^{<2405>}Jeremiah 10:25).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 11

The prophecy contained in Jeremiah 11—12 seems to belong to an early period of Jeremiah's life. The covenant (^{2410B}Jeremiah 11:2) was that renewed by Josiah in his 18th year, after the discovery of the Book of the Law in the temple (^{1233B}2 Kings 23:3); while ^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:13 apparently refers to the public establishment of idolatry by Manasseh (^{2413B}Jeremiah 21:3). The people took no hearty part in Josiah's reformation, and the prophet therefore sets before them the consequences that will inevitably follow upon their disloyalty to their covenant-God. The prophecy was probably called forth by the conspiracy of the men of Judah and of his own relatives of Anathoth to murder Jeremiah (^{2418B}Jeremiah 11:18-23; 12:1-6), for such deeds, which but too well represented the nation's whole course, punishment must come, if unrepented of.

^{2410B}**Jeremiah 11:2.** *The words of this covenant* The phrase used (^{1233B}2 Kings 23:3) to describe the contents of the Book of the Law.

^{2410B}**Jeremiah 11:4.** *From the iron furnace* Rather, out of "the iron furnace," Egypt (see ^{604B}Deuteronomy 4:20). The constant reference to Deuteronomy shows how great had been the effect upon Jeremiah's mind of the public recitation of the "Book of the covenant" found in the temple.

^{2410B}**Jeremiah 11:5.** *As it is this day* God had kept the terms of the covenant. Whether the promised land would permanently remain the property of the Jews would depend upon their observance of their part of the covenant.

So be it, O LORD Or, "Amen, Yahweh." The prophet was literally obeying the command given in ^{6714B}Deuteronomy 27:14-26, and the same word should be kept in both places.

^{2410B}**Jeremiah 11:6.** *Proclaim ...* Probably Jeremiah accompanied Josiah in his progress (^{1235B}2 Kings 23:15-20), and everywhere read to the people the words of the newly-found book.

^{2410B}**Jeremiah 11:8.** *I will bring* Rather, I have brought. The breach of the covenant upon their part had always brought temporal calamity. The last examples were the deportation of the ten tribes by Salmanezer, and the

leading of Manasseh prisoner to Babylon in chains (^{<431>}2 Chronicles 33:11).

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 11:9.** *A conspiracy* The defection from the covenant was as general as if it had been the result of preconcerted arrangement. The decided course taken by Josiah may, however, have led the opposite party to secret combinations against him.

^{<410>}**Jeremiah 11:10.** *Their forefathers* literally, “their fathers, the first ones:” in allusion to the idolatries committed in the wilderness, and by the generations whose history is given in the Book of Judges.

And they went after Rather, yea! they have walked “after other gods to serve them.” The “they” refers to the men of Jeremiah’s day.

^{<411>}**Jeremiah 11:11.** *I will bring* Or, am bringing.

^{<411>}**Jeremiah 11:13.** *That shameful thing* i.e., Baal; public establishment of idolatry, such as actually took place in the reign of Manasseh (^{<433>}2 Chronicles 33:3. Contrast ^{<284>}2 Kings 18:4).

^{<411>}**Jeremiah 11:14-17.** A parenthesis. As in ^{<476>}Jeremiah 7:16, all intercession is forbidden, and for this reason. Prayer for others for the forgiveness of their sins avails only when they also pray. The cry of the people now was that of the guilty smarting under punishment, not of the penitent mourning over sin.

^{<415>}**Jeremiah 11:15.** This passage, like ^{<312>}Isaiah 1:12, rebukes the inconsistency of Judah’s public worship of Yahweh with their private immorality and preference for idolatry. Translate it: “What hath My beloved in My house to practice guile there? The great men and the holy flesh (i.e., the sacrifices) shall pass away from thee.”

^{<416>}**Jeremiah 11:16.** The “goodly” or “shapely fruit,” signifies the righteousness and faith which ought to have been the result of Israel’s possession of extraordinary privileges. The tree did not bear this fruit, and God now destroys it by a thunderstorm.

^{<418>}**Jeremiah 11:18.** Rather, “gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it.” Jeremiah shows (^{<418>}Jeremiah 11:18-23), that the general conspiracy of the people against Yahweh and the special plot against himself was revealed to him by God.

Jeremiah 11:19. *Like a lamb or an ox* Rather, “like a tame lamb.” Jeremiah had lived at Anathoth as one of the family, never suspecting that, like a tame lamb, the time would come for him to be killed.

The tree with the fruit thereof The words are those of a proverb or dark saying. All the Churches agree in understanding that under the person of Jeremiah these things are said by Christ.

Jeremiah 11:22. *The young men* i.e., those of the legal age for military service.

Jeremiah 11:23. *No remnant* 128 men of Anathoth returned from exile (¹⁵¹²³Ezra 2:23; ⁴⁶⁷²⁷Nehemiah 7:27). Jeremiah’s denunciation was limited to those who had sought his life. The year of their visitation would be the year of the siege of Jerusalem, when Anathoth being in its immediate vicinity would have its share of the horrors of war.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 12

Some divide Jeremiah 12 into three extracts (^{<24121>}Jeremiah 12:1-6,7-13,14-17) from discourses of Jeremiah not preserved at length; others regard it as a connected discourse occasioned by a drought in the days of Josiah (compare ^{<24124>}Jeremiah 12:4); others see in the “evil neighbors” (^{<24124>}Jeremiah 12:14), an allusion to the bands of Syrians etc., who infested the land after Jehoiakim’s revolt from Nebuchadnezzar. More probably the outburst of expostulation (^{<24121>}Jeremiah 12:1-4) was occasioned by the plot of the men of Anathoth, and upon it the rest follows naturally.

^{<24121>}**Jeremiah 12:1.** *Yet let me talk ...* Rather, yet will I speak with thee on a matter of right. This sense is well given in the margin. The prophet acknowledges the general righteousness of God’s dealings, but cannot reconcile with it the prosperity of the conspirators of Anathoth. This difficulty was often present to the minds of the saints of the Old Testament, see ^{<18217>}Job 21:7ff; Psalm 37; Psalm 73.

Happy Rather, secure, tranquil.

^{<24122>}**Jeremiah 12:2.** *Their veins* i.e., their heart. The reins were regarded by the Jews as the seat of the affections.

^{<24123>}**Jeremiah 12:3.** *Thou hast seen me ...* Rather, “Thou seest me and triest mine heart” at all times, and knowest the sincerity of its devotion” toward Thee.”

Pull them out The original is used (^{<24100>}Jeremiah 10:20) of the rending asunder of the cords of the tent, and (^{<25170>}Ezekiel 17:9) of the tearing up of roots. Jeremiah does not doubt God’s justice, or the ultimate punishment of the wicked, but he wants it administered in a summary way.

Prepare literally, “sanctify,” i.e., devote.

^{<24124>}**Jeremiah 12:4.** The Hebrew divides this verse differently. “How long shall the land mourn, and the herb of the whole field wither? Because of the wickedness of them that dwell therein cattle and fowl have ceased to be: for he will not see, say they, our latter end.” The people mock the prophet, saying, In spite of all his threatenings we shall outlive him.

Jeremiah complained that at a time of great general misery powerful men thrived upon the ruin of others: even the innocent cattle and fowl suffered with the rest. To him it seemed that all this might have been cured by some signal display of divine justice. If God, instead of dealing with men by general and slow-working laws, would tear (out some of the worst offenders from among the rest, the land might yet be saved.

Jeremiah 12:5,6. Yahweh rebukes Jeremiah's impatience, showing him by two proverbial sayings, that there were still greater trials of faith in store for him. Prosperous wickedness is after all a mere ordinary trial, a mere "running with the footmen;" he will have to exert far greater powers of endurance.

And if in the land ... Rather, "and in a land of peace thou art secure; but how wilt thou do amid the pride of Jordan?" if thou canst feel safe only where things are tranquil, what wilt thou do in the hour of danger? The "pride of Jordan" is taken to, mean the luxuriant thickets along its banks, famous as the haunt of lions (compare **Jeremiah 49:19; 50:44;** **Zechariah 11:3**). What will the prophet do when he has to tread the tangled maze of a jungle with the lions roaring round him?

Jeremiah 12:6. *Called a multitude* Rather, "called aloud." Compare **Jeremiah 4:5**. In all this Jeremiah was the type of Christ (compare **Zechariah 13:6;** **Mark 3:21;** **John 7:5**).

Jeremiah 12:7-9. Yahweh shows that the downfall of the nation was occasioned by no want of love on His part, but by the nation's conduct.

Left More correctly, cast away.

Jeremiah 12:8. Judah has not merely refused obedience, but become intractable and fierce, like an untamed lion. It has roared against God with open blasphemy. As His favor is life, so is His hatred death, i.e., Jerusalem's punishment shall be as if inflicted by one that hated her.

Jeremiah 12:9. Rather, "Is My heritage unto Me as a speckled bird? Are the birds upon her round about? Come, assemble all the wild beasts: bring them to devour her." By "a speckled" or parti-colored "bird" is probably meant some kind of vulture.

^{<2420>}**Jeremiah 12:10.** Nebuchadnezzar and his confederate kings trampled Judah under foot, as heedless of the ruin they were inflicting as the shepherds would be who led their flocks to browse in spring upon the tender shoots of the vine.

^{<2421>}**Jeremiah 12:11.** *Desolate* The force of the protest lies in this word. Thrice the prophet uses it.

Layeth it to heart Rather, laid it “to heart.” The desolate land must put up its silent cry to God, because the people had refused to see the signs of the coming retribution.

^{<2422>}**Jeremiah 12:12.** *Through* in. Even these remote scours do not escape, polluted as they had been by the nation’s idolatries.

Shall devour Or, devoureth. These hosts of war come as Yahweh’s sword.

No flesh shall have peace “Flesh” in ^{<0003>}Genesis 6:3 means mankind as sinners; here, Judah. “Peace” in Hebrew has the wider signification of “welfare, happiness.” Hence, their salutation in life was, “Peace be to thee,” and in death “In Peace” was engraved upon their sepulchres.

^{<2423>}**Jeremiah 12:13.** *Shall reap ... shall not profit* Rather, have reaped ... have profited nothing. The force of the proverb is that all their labors had ended only in disappointment.

And they shall be ashamed of your revenues Or, yea, be ashamed of your produce — the produce of the fields.

^{<2424>}**Jeremiah 12:14.** The prophet addresses the spoilers.

Evil neighbors The Syrians, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, who at all times took advantage of Judah’s weakness. The special mercy to Judah was the prelude to mercy to the whole Gentile world.

^{<2426>}**Jeremiah 12:16.** The accomplishment of this blessing depends upon both Judah and the Gentiles reversing their past conduct. Then shall the believing Gentile be admitted within the fold of the true, because spiritual, Israel — Christ’s Church.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 13

The date of this prophecy (Jeremiah 13) is fixed by the mention of the queen-mother (^{<2438>}Jeremiah 13:18) i.e., Nehushta, the mother of Jehoiachin. We have in it one of those symbolic acts by which great lessons were taught the people more impressively than by words. Alter the burning of the scroll in the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah disappeared from Jerusalem, and did not show himself there again for seven years. In the last few mournful days of Jehoiakim, he was once again seen in the streets of Jerusalem, with his prophetic robe of black camel's hair girt about with this girdle, mildewed and waterstained as the symbol of the pitiable estate of a nation which had rejected its God. His place of refuge may have been near the Euphrates. Many such acts alleged to have been performed by the prophets may have been allegories, but this we believe to have been literally true.

^{<2431>}**Jeremiah 13:1.** *A linen girdle* The appointed dress of the priestly order (^{<2430>}Leviticus 16:4, ...).

Put it not in water i.e., do not wash it, and so let it represent the deep-grained pollution of the people.

^{<2431>}**Jeremiah 13:4.** *In a hole of the rock* "In a cleft of the rock." As there are no fissured rocks in Babylonia, the place where Jeremiah hid the girdle must have been somewhere in the upper part of the river.

^{<2436>}**Jeremiah 13:6.** *Many days* The seventy years' captivity.

^{<2430>}**Jeremiah 13:10.** This verse limits the application of the symbol. Only the ungodly and the idolatrous part of the people decayed at Babylon. The religious portion was strengthened and invigorated by the exile (^{<2445>}Jeremiah 24:5-7).

^{<2431>}**Jeremiah 13:11.** The reason why the girdle was chosen as the symbol. Similarly, Israel was the people chosen and set apart that in and by them the Holy Spirit might work for the salvation of mankind.

^{<2432>}**Jeremiah 13:12.** *Bottle* jar, the "potter's vessel" of ^{<2304>}Isaiah 30:14: a new symbol, but with the same meaning, the approaching destruction of Jerusalem (^{<2434>}Jeremiah 13:14).

²⁴¹³¹**Jeremiah 13:13.** *The kings ...* i.e., his successors in general. In the fall of Jerusalem four kings in succession were crushed.

²⁴¹³⁴**Jeremiah 13:14.** All orders and degrees of men in the state would be broken in indiscriminate destruction.

²⁴¹³⁵**Jeremiah 13:15.** *Be not proud* Both the symbols were of a nature very humiliating to the national self-respect.

²⁴¹³⁶**Jeremiah 13:16.** *The dark mountains* Rather, “the mountains of twilight.” Judah is not walking upon the safe highway, but upon dangerous mountains: and the dusk is closing round her. While then the light still serves let her return unto her God.

And, while ye look ... Translate, “and ye wait for light, and He turn it (the light) into the shadow of death, yea change it into clouded darkness.”

²⁴¹³⁷**Jeremiah 13:17.** *The LORD’S flock* The people carried away captive with Jeconiah formed the Jewish Church, as we are expressly told, whereas Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem possessed only the externals of the Church and not its reality. It is for this reason that the seventy years’ exile counts from Jeconiah’s captivity.

²⁴¹³⁸**Jeremiah 13:18.** *The queen* i.e., “the queen-mother:” the word signifies literally “the great lady.” The king’s mother took precedence of his wives.

Sit down The usual position of slaves.

For your principalities ... Rather, “for the ornaments of your heads, even the crown of your majesty, shall come down.”

²⁴¹³⁹**Jeremiah 13:19.** *Shall be shut up* Rather, “are shut up, and no man openeth them.” The cities of the Negeb, the southern district of Judah, are blockaded, with no one to raise the siege. The captivity was the inevitable result of the capture of the fortified towns. An army entering from the north would march along the Shefelah, or fertile plain near the seacoast, and would capture the outlying cities, before it attacked Jerusalem, almost inaccessible among the mountains.

Judah shall be ... Translate, “Judah is ... “

²⁴¹³³**Jeremiah 13:20.** Jerusalem is asked where the cities, which once lay grouped round her, like a goodly flock of sheep, are gone? The question implies blame.

²⁴¹³⁴**Jeremiah 13:21.** Translate, “What wilt thou say, O Jerusalem, when He, Yahweh, shall set over thee for head those whom thou hast taught to be thy bosom friends?” The foreign powers, whose friendship she has been courting, will become her tyrants.

²⁴¹³⁵**Jeremiah 13:22.** *Made bare* Rather, “ill-used, treated with violence.” The long flowing robes worn by ladies of rank, are to be laid aside, that they might do menial work, bare-legged, like slaves. The ill-usage to the heels is the having to tramp barefoot, a thing very painful to women accustomed to the seclusion of the female apartments.

²⁴¹³⁶**Jeremiah 13:23.** This verse answers the question, May not Judah avert this calamity by repentance? No: because her sins are too inveterate. By the Ethiopian (Hebrew: Cushite) is meant not the Cushite of Arabia but of Africa, i.e., the negro.

²⁴¹³⁷**Jeremiah 13:24.** *Stubble* Broken straw separated from the wheat after the grain had been trampled out by the oxen. Sometimes it was burned as useless; at other times left to be blown away by the wind from the desert.

²⁴¹³⁸**Jeremiah 13:25.** *The portion of thy measures* i.e., “thy measured portion” (²⁴¹³⁹Job 11:9). Others render it: “the portion of thy lap,” the upper garment being constantly used for holding things (²⁴¹⁴⁰Ruth 3:15).

In falsehood i.e in idols (see the marginal reference).

²⁴¹⁴¹**Jeremiah 13:26.** *Therefore will I* literally, “And I also;” I also must have my turn, I too must retaliate. Compare ²⁴¹⁴²Nahum 3:5.

²⁴¹⁴³**Jeremiah 13:27.** *And thine abominations* “Even thy abominations.” The prophet sums up the three charges against Judah, namely, spiritual adultery, inordinate eagerness after idolatry (see the note at ²⁴¹⁴⁴Jeremiah 5:7 note), and shameless participation in pagan orgies.

In the fields “in the field,” the open, unenclosed country (see ²⁴¹⁴⁵Jeremiah 6:25; 12:4).

Wilt thou not ... once be? “Or, how long yet ere thou be made clean!”
These words explain the teaching of ^{24:23}Jeremiah 13:23. Repentance was not an actual, but a moral impossibility, and after a long time Judah was to be cleansed. It was to return from exile penitent and forgiven.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 14

The occasion of this prophecy (Jeremiah 14—15) was a drought, the terrible effects of which are described with much force. Probably, therefore, it belongs to the early years of Jehoiakim, when Jeremiah saw all the efforts of Josiah's reign utterly frustrated.

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:1.** *The dearth* Really, the drought,

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:2.** *They are black unto the ground* The people assembled at the gates, the usual places of concourse, are in deep mourning and sit humbly on the ground.

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:3.** *Little ones* mean ones, the common people. The word is unique to Jeremiah (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 48:4).

The pits i.e., tanks for holding water.

Covered their heads The sign of grief.

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:4.** *Is chapt* Rather, is dismayed. "The ground" is used metaphorically for the people who until the ground.

In the earth i.e., "in the land."

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:6.** *Like dragons* "Like jackals" (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 9:11).

No grass The keen sight of the wild donkey is well known, but they look around in vain for herb.

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:7.** *Do thou it* Rather, "deal thou, act thou for Thy Name's sake, i.e., not according to the strict measure of right and wrong, but as a God merciful and gracious.

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:9.** *Astonied* The word may possibly mean "one who is taken by surprise and loses his presence of mind."

²⁴⁴⁰**Jeremiah 14:10.** The answer is addressed to the people. Jeremiah had prayed as their representative, but he must not intercede: for to the same degree that God was determined to punish them, to the same degree

(thus) they love to continue their offence.” Compare ^{<2456>}Jeremiah 15:6 note.

Therefore the LORD ... Translate:

“And Yahweh hath no pleasure in them: Now will He remember their iniquity and visit their sins.”

Interference in their behalf is out of the question.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 14:12.** *Their cry i.e* prayer offered aloud.

Oblation A meat-offering (^{<300E>}Leviticus 2:1).

The sword, famine, and pestilence The two latter ever follow upon the track of the first (^{<2452>}Ezekiel 5:12), and by these God will consume them, yet so as to leave a remnant. The chastisement, which crushes those who harden themselves against it, purifies the penitent.

^{<2443>}**Jeremiah 14:13.** The false prophets in Jeremiah’s days were so numerous and influential as to counteract and almost nullify the influence of the true prophet. We find in Isaiah the first indications of the internal decay of the prophetic order; and Micah, his contemporary, denounces the false prophets in the strongest terms (^{<300B>}Micah 3:5,11). For the secret of their power see ^{<2453>}Jeremiah 5:31.

^{<2444>}**Jeremiah 14:14.** *Divination* i.e., “conjuring,” the abuse of the less understood powers of nature. It was strictly forbidden to all Jews (^{<0580>}Deuteronomy 18:10).

A thing of nought Probably a small idol made of the more precious metals (^{<2320>}Isaiah 2:20). These methods the prophet declares to be the “deceit of their heart, i.e., not self-deceit, but a willful and intentional fraud.

^{<2446>}**Jeremiah 14:16.** *I will pour ...* i.e., their wickedness shall be brought home to them.

^{<2447>}**Jeremiah 14:17.** A message from God to the effect that the calamity would be so overwhelming as to cause perpetual weeping; it is set before the people under the representation of Jeremiah’s own sorrow.

The virgin daughter of my people The epithet testifies to God's previous care of Judah. She had been as jealously guarded from other nations as virgins are in an oriental household (compare ^{<2042>}Song of Solomon 4:12).

^{<2449>}**Jeremiah 14:19-22.** A second (compare ^{<2447>}Jeremiah 14:7-9) earnest intercession, acknowledging the wickedness of the nation, but appealing to the covenant and to God's Almighty power.

Lothed More exactly, "hath thrown away as worthless."

^{<2449>}**Jeremiah 14:20.** *Our wickedness, and* Omit and. National sin is the sin of the fathers, perpetuated generation after generation by the children.

^{<2449>}**Jeremiah 14:21.** This verse is in the original very emphatic, and consists of a series of broken ejaculations: "Abhor not for thy name's sake! Disgrace — lightly esteem" in ^{<16215>}Deuteronomy 32:15 — "not the throne of thy glory! Remember! Break not etc. with us!" The throne of Yahweh's glory is Jerusalem.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 14:22.** None of the idols of the Gentiles can put an end to this present distress.

Art not thou he, O LORD our God! Rather, "art thou not Yahweh our God?"

Thou hast made all these things i.e., the heaven with its showers.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 15

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:1.** *Cast them out of my sight* Rather, “send them out of My presence, and let them go away.” The prophet is to dismiss them, because their mediators, Moses and Samuel, whose intercession had been accepted in old times (marginal references), would intercede now in vain.

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:3.** *Kinds* literally, as the margin, i.e., classes of things. The first is to destroy the living, the other three to mutilate and consume the dead.

To tear literally, “to drag along the ground.” It forcibly expresses the contumely to which the bodies of the slain will be exposed.

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:4.** *To be removed* Rather, “to be a terror.”

Because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah The name of the pious father intensifies the horror at the wickedness of the son.

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:6.** This verse gives the reason of the refusal of Yahweh to hear the prophet’s intercession. The punishment due has been delayed unto wearisomeness, and this seeming failure of justice has made Judah withdraw further from God.

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:7.** *I will fan them ...* Or, “I have winnowed them with a winnowing shovel.” The “gates of the land” mean the places by which men enter or leave it. As God winnows them they are driven out of the land through all its outlets in every direction.

I will bereave Rather, “I have bereaved, I have destroyed my people.” Omit “of children.”

Since they return not ... Rather, “from their ways they have not returned.”

^{24:57} **Jeremiah 15:8.** Translate, “I have brought upon them, even upon the mother of the young man, a spoiler etc.” The word rendered “young man” means a picked warrior. The mother has borne a valiant champion; but neither his prowess nor the numerous offspring of the other can avail to save those who gave them birth; war bereaves both alike.

At noonday i.e., unexpectedly, as armies used to rest at noon (see ^{<2404>}Jeremiah 6:4 note).

I have caused him ... Rather, “I have brought suddenly upon her,” the mother of the young warrior, “anguish and terrors.”

^{<2459>}**Jeremiah 15:9.** *She hath been ashamed* Or, “is ashamed.” To a Hebrew mother to be childless was a disgrace. Many consider that ^{<2457>}Jeremiah 15:7-9 refer to the battle of Megiddo, and depict the consternation of Jerusalem at that sad event. If so, in the sun going down while it was day, there will be a reference to the eclipse on September 30, 610 B.C.

^{<2450>}**Jeremiah 15:10.** Jeremiah vents his sorrow at the rejection of his prayer. In reading these and similar expostulations we feel that we have to do with a man who was the reluctant minister of a higher power, from where alone he drew strength to be content to do and suffer.

Strife More exactly, “lawsuit;” the sense is, “I am as a man who has to enter into judgment with and reprove the whole earth.”

I have neither lent ... i.e., I have no personal cause of quarrel with the people, that I should thus be perpetually at strife with them. The relations between the moneylender and the debtor were a fruitful source of lawsuits and quarrelling.

^{<2451>}**Jeremiah 15:11.** *Shall be well with thy remnant* Or, thy loosing shall be for good; in the sense of being set free, deliverance.

To entreat thee well ... Rather, “to supplicate thee in the time of evil etc.,” fulfilled in ^{<2406>}Jeremiah 21:1,2; 37:3; 42:2.

^{<2452>}**Jeremiah 15:12.** *The steel* “brass,” i.e., bronze. By the “iron” is meant Jeremiah’s intercession; but this cannot alter the divine purpose to send Judah into exile, which is firm as steel and brass. For “brass” see ^{<2273>}Exodus 25:3 note. The alloy of copper and zinc now called brass was entirely unknown to the ancients.

^{<2453>}**Jeremiah 15:13.** Jeremiah is personally addressed in the verse, because he stood before God as the intercessor, representing the people.

- (1) God would give Judah's treasures away for nothing; implying that He did not value them.
- (2) The cause of this contempt is Judah's sins.
- (3) This is justified by Judah having committed them throughout her whole land.

^{<241514>}**Jeremiah 15:14.** Render, "And I will make thee serve thine enemies in a land thou knewest not."

For a fire ... See the marginal reference. The added words show that the punishment then predicted is about to be fulfilled.

^{<241515>}**Jeremiah 15:15-18.** This is the prayer of a man in bitter grief, whose human nature cannot at present submit to the divine will. God's long-suffering toward the wicked seemed to the prophet to be the abandonment of himself to death; justice itself required that one who was suffering contumely for God's sake should be delivered.

Rebuke i.e., reproach, contumely.

^{<241516>}**Jeremiah 15:16.** *Thy words were found* Jeremiah's summons to the prophetic office had not been expected or sought for by him.

I did eat them i.e., I received them with joy. This eating of the divine words expresses also the close union between that which came from God and the prophet's own being.

I am called by thy name i.e., I am consecrated to Thy service, am ordained to be Thy prophet.

^{<241517>}**Jeremiah 15:17.** Rather, "I sat not in the assembly of the laughers, and was merry." From the time God's words came to Jeremiah he abstained from things innocent, and a gravity came over him beyond his years.

I sat alone because of thy hand As a person consecrated to God he would also be "separated." See ^{<241005>}Jeremiah 1:5; compare ^{<44132>}Acts 13:2.

With indignation The prophet thus taught of God sees the sins of the people as offences against God, and as involving the ruin of His Church.

^{<2458>}**Jeremiah 15:18.** *Why is my pain perpetual* i.e., Are all my labors to be in vain?

As a liar ... Really, “as a deceitful brook,” a brook which flows only in the winter, the opposite of the “perennial stream” of ^{<3184>}Amos 5:24. Jeremiah had expected that there would be a perpetual interference of Providence in his behalf, instead whereof things seemed to take only their natural course.

^{<2459>}**Jeremiah 15:19.** Jeremiah had questioned God’s righteousness (see ^{<2420>}Jeremiah 12:1 note); he is told, “If thou return,” if thou repent thee of thy doubts, and think only of thy duty, “then will I bring thee again, then will I cause thee again to stand before Me.” To stand before a person means to be his chief officer or vicegerent. It implies therefore the restoration of Jeremiah to the prophetic office.

If thou take forth the precious from the vile i.e., if thou cause the precious metal to come forth from the dross. Jeremiah was to separate in himself what was divine and holy from the dross of human passion. Let him abandon this mistrust, this sensitiveness, this idea that God did not deal righteously with him, and then “he shall be as God’s mouth, i.e., as the organ by which God speaks.

Let them return ... Rather, “they shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them.” A flattering prophet perishes with the people whom his soft speeches have confirmed in their sin: but the truthful speaking of God’s word saves both.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 16

In this prophecy (^{<4101>}Jeremiah 16:1-18), the punishment of the people is set forth in even sterner terms than in the last. The whole land is likened to a desert covered with the bodies of the dead, who lie unbemoaned and uncared for; and the prophet himself is commanded to abstain from the common usages of mankind that his motto of life, as well as his words, may warn the people of the greatness of the approaching calamity. There is, however, to be finally a return from exile, but only after the idolatry of the nation has been severely punished. The prophecy was probably written about the close of Jehoiakim's reign.

^{<4102>}**Jeremiah 16:2.** As marriage was obligatory upon the Jews, the prohibition of it to Jeremiah was a sign that the impending calamity was so great as to override all ordinary duties. Jeremiah was unmarried, but the force of the sign lay in its being an exception to the ordinary practice of the prophets.

In this place The whole of Judaea.

^{<4103>}**Jeremiah 16:3.** The times were such that for “the present distress” it was wise for all to abstain from marriage (^{<4073>}1 Corinthians 7:26; ^{<4104>}Matthew 24:19).

^{<4105>}**Jeremiah 16:6.** *Cut themselves ... make themselves bald* Both these practices were strictly forbidden in the Law (marginal references) probably as being pagan customs, but they seem to have remained in common use. By “making bald” is meant shaving a bare patch on the front of the head.

^{<4106>}**Jeremiah 16:7.** *Tear themselves* Better as in the margin; “break broad for them.” It was customary upon the death of a relative to fast, and for the friends and neighbors after a decent delay to come and comfort the mourner, and urge food upon him (^{<4027>}2 Samuel 12:17); food was also distributed at funerals to the mourners, and to the poor.

Cup of consolation Marginal reference note.

^{<4107>}**Jeremiah 16:11.** The severe sentence passed upon them is the consequence of idolatry persisted in through many generations until it has finally deepened into national apostasy.

Jeremiah 16:12. *Imaginations* Read stubbornness.

Jeremiah 16:13. *And there shall ye ...* Ironic, and “there ye may serve other gods day and night, since I will shew you no favor.”

Jeremiah 16:14,15. These two verses, by promising a deliverance greater than that from Egypt, implied also a chastisement more terrible than the bondage in the iron furnace there. Instead of their being placed in one land, there was to be a scattering into the north and many other countries, followed finally by a restoration.

Jeremiah 16:16. The scattering of the people is to be like that of hunted animals, of which but few escape, the ancient method of hunting being to enclose a large space with beaters and nets, and so drive everything within it to some place where it was destroyed. The destruction of the whole male population was one of the horrible customs of ancient warfare, and the process is called in Herodotus “sweeping the country with a drag-net.” The same authority tells us that this method could only be effectually carried out on an island. Literally, understood, the fishers are the main armies who, in the towns and fortresses, capture the people in crowds as in a net, while the hunters are the light-armed troops, who pursue the fugitives over the whole country, and drive them out of their hiding places as hunters track out their game.

Jeremiah 16:17. This chastisement arises not from caprice, but is decreed upon full knowledge and examination of their doings.

Jeremiah 16:18. *First* Before the return from exile.

I will recompense their iniquity ... double The ordinary rule of the Law (^{241D}Isaiah 40:2 note). Sin is twofold; there is the leaving of God’s will undone, and the actual wrongdoing. And every punishment is twofold: first, there is the loss of the blessing which would have followed upon obedience, and secondly, the presence of actual misery.

Because they have defiled ... Rather, “because they have profaned My land with the carcasses of their detestable things” (their lifeless and hateful idols, the very touch of which pollutes like that of a corpse, ^{409B}Numbers 19:11); “and have filled My inheritance with their abominations.”

Jeremiah 16:21. *This once* Whether we consider the greatness of the national disgrace and suffering caused by it, or its effect upon the mind of the Jews, the burning of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, followed by the captivity of the people at Babylon, stands out as the greatest manifestation of God's "hand" in all His dealings with them.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 17

This section (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 17:1-4) is inseparably connected with the preceding. Judah's sin had been described (^{<2469>}Jeremiah 16:19) as one of which the very Gentiles will become ashamed. and for which she will shortly be punished by, an intervention of God's hand more marked than anything in her previous history. Jeremiah now dwells upon the indelible nature of her sin.

A pen of iron i.e., an iron chisel for cutting inscriptions upon tables of stone.

The point of a diamond The ancients were well acquainted with the cutting powers of the diamond.

altars Not Yahweh's one altar, but the many altars which the Jews had set up to Baalim (^{<24113>}Jeremiah 11:13). Though Josiah had purged the land of these, yet in the eleven years of Jehoiakim's reign they had multiplied again, and were the external proofs of Judah's idolatry, as the table of her heart was the internal witness.

^{<2470>}**Jeremiah 17:2.** *While their children remember their altars* Perhaps an allusion to their sacrifices of children to Moloch. Present perhaps at some such blood-stained rite, its horrors would be engraven forever upon the memory.

Groves "Asherahs," i.e., wooden images of Astarte (see ^{<02343>}Exodus 34:13 note).

^{<2470>}**Jeremiah 17:3.** *O my mountain in the field* i.e., Jerusalem or Zion, called the Rock of the Plain in ^{<02113>}Jeremiah 21:13. "The field" is the open unenclosed country, here contrasted with the privileged height of Zion.

Or sin i.e., because of thy sin.

^{<2470>}**Jeremiah 17:4.** The verb rendered "discontinue" is that used of letting the land rest (^{<02311>}Exodus 23:11), and of releasing creditors (^{<01512>}Deuteronomy 15:2) in the sabbatical year. As Judah had not kept these sabbatical years she must now discontinue the tillage of God's inheritance

until the land had had its rest. “Even thyself may mean and that through thyself,” through thine own fault.

Jeremiah 17:5-18. In the rest of the prophecy Jeremiah dwells upon the moral faults which had led to Judah’s ruin.

Jeremiah 17:6. *Like the heath* Or, “like a destitute man” (¹⁹²¹⁷Psalm 102:17). The verbs “he shall see” (or fear) and “shall inhabit” plainly show that a man is here meant and not a plant.

Jeremiah 17:8. *The river* Or, “water-course” (²³¹²⁵Isaiah 30:25), made for purposes of irrigation.

Shall not see Or, “shall not fear (²⁴¹⁷⁶Jeremiah 17:6).” God’s people feel trouble as much as other people, but they do not fear it because they know

(1) that it is for their good, and

(2) that God will give them strength to bear it.

Jeremiah 17:9. The train of thought is apparently this: If the man is so blessed (²⁴¹⁷⁶Jeremiah 17:7,8) who trusts in Yahweh, what is the reason why men so generally “make flesh their arm”? And the answer is: Because man’s heart is incapable of seeing things in a straightforward manner, but is full of shrewd guile, and ever seeking to overreach others.

Desperately wicked Rather, mortally sick.

Jeremiah 17:10. The answer to the question, “who can know it?” To himself a man’s heart is an inscrutable mystery: God alone can fathom it.

Ways Rather, way, his course of life. The “and” must be omitted, for the last clause explains what is meant “by man’s way,” when he comes before God for judgment. It is “the fruit,” the final result “of his doings, i.e., his real character as formed by the acts and habits of his life.

Jeremiah 17:11. Rather, “As the partridge hath gathered eggs which it laid not, so ...” The general sense is: the covetous man is as sure to reap finally disappointment only as is the partridge which piles up eggs not of her own laying, and is unable to hatch them.

A fool A Nabal. See ⁰²⁵²⁵1 Samuel 25:25.

^{<2472>}**Jeremiah 17:12,13.** Or, “Thou throne ... thou place ... thou hope ... Yahweh! All that forsake Thee etc.” The prophet concludes his prediction with the expression of his own trust in Yahweh, and confidence that the divine justice will finally be vindicated by the punishment of the wicked. The “throne of glory” is equivalent to Him who is enthroned in glory.

^{<2473>}**Jeremiah 17:13.** *Shall be written in the earth* i.e., their names shall quickly disappear, unlike those graven in the rock forever (^{<18024>}Job 19:24). A board covered with sand is used in the East to this day in schools for giving lessons in writing: but writing inscribed on such materials is intended to be immediately obliterated. Equally fleeting is the existence of those who forsake God.

“All men are written somewhere, the saints in heaven, but sinners upon earth” (Origen).

^{<2475>}**Jeremiah 17:15.** This taunt shows that this prophecy was written before any very signal fulfillment of Jeremiah’s words had taken place, and prior therefore to the capture of Jerusalem at the close of Jehoiakim’s life. “Now” means “I pray,” and is ironical.

^{<2476>}**Jeremiah 17:16.** *I have not hastened from* i.e., I have not sought to escape from.

A pastor to follow thee Rather, “a shepherd after Thee.” “Shepherd” means “ruler, magistrate” (^{<2418>}Jeremiah 2:8 note), and belongs to the prophet not as a teacher, but as one invested with authority by God to guide and direct the political course of the nation. So Yahweh guides His people (^{<1821>}Psalms 23:1,2), and the prophet does so “after Him,” following obediently His instructions.

The woeful day literally, “the day of mortal sickness:” the day on which Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and the temple burned.

Right Omit the word. What Jeremiah asserts is that he spake as in God’s presence. They were no words of his own, but had the authority of Him before whom he stood. Compare ^{<2459>}Jeremiah 15:19.

^{<2477>}**Jeremiah 17:17.** *A terror* Rather, “a cause of dismay,” or consternation (^{<2017>}Jeremiah 1:17). By not fulfilling Jeremiah’s prediction God Himself seemed to put him to shame.

^{<34718>}**Jeremiah 17:18.** *Confounded* Put to shame.

Destroy them ... Rather, break them with a double breaking: a twofold punishment, the first their general share in the miseries attendant upon their country's fall; the second, a special punishment for their sin in persecuting and mocking God's prophet.

^{<34719>}**Jeremiah 17:19-27.** This prophecy on the observance of the Sabbath, is the first of a series of short predictions. arranged probably in chronological order among themselves, but in other respects independent of one another. Its tone is mild, and dissuasive rather of future neglect than condemnatory of past misconduct; and it may be assigned to the commencement of Jehoiakim's reign. Its similarity to the prophecy contained in ^{<34720>}Jeremiah 22:1-5 makes it probable that they were contemporaneous.

^{<34719>}**Jeremiah 17:19.** *The gate of the children of the people* Perhaps the principal entrance of the outer court of the temple. Very probably there was traffic there, as in our Lord's time, in doves and other requisites for sacrifice, and so the warning to keep the Sabbath was as necessary there as at the city gates.

^{<34721>}**Jeremiah 17:21.** *To yourselves* literally, "in your souls, i.e., in yourselves." They were to be on their guard from the depths of their own conscience, thoroughly and on conviction.

Bear no burden on the sabbath day Apparently the Sabbath day was kept negligently. The country people were in the habit of coming to Jerusalem on the Sabbath to attend the temple service, but mingled traffic with their devotions, bringing the produce of their fields and gardens with them for disposal. The people of Jerusalem for their part took (^{<34722>}Jeremiah 17:22) their wares to the gates, and carried on a brisk traffic there with the villagers. Both parties seem to have abstained from manual labor, but did not consider that buying and selling were prohibited by the fourth commandment.

^{<34723>}**Jeremiah 17:25.** A picture of national grandeur. The prophet associates with the king the princes of the Davidic lineage, who in magnificent procession accompany the king as he goes in and out of Jerusalem.

Shall remain forever Or, “shall be inhabited forever:” populousness is promised.

²⁴¹⁷²⁶**Jeremiah 17:26.** The reward for keeping the Sabbath day holy consists in three things;

- (1) in great national prosperity,
- (2) in the lasting welfare of Jerusalem, and
- (3) in the wealth and piety of the people generally, indicated by their numerous sacrifices.

Bringing sacrifices of praise Rather, “bringing praise.” This clause covers all that precedes.

The verse is interesting as specifying the exact limits of the dominions of the Davidic kings, now confined to Judah and Benjamin. These two tribes are divided according to their physical conformation into

- (1) the Shefelah, or low country lying between the mountains and the Mediterranean;
- (2) the mountain which formed the central region, extending to the wilderness of Judah, on the Dead Sea; and
- (3) the Negeb, or arid region, which lay to the south of Judah.

²⁴¹⁷²⁷**Jeremiah 17:27.** Upon disobedience follows the anger of God, which will consume like a fire all the, splendor of the offending city.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 18

In the first prophecy of the series (Jeremiah 18), the fate of Jerusalem was still undetermined; a long line of kings might yet reign there in splendor, and the city be inhabited forever. This was possible only so long as it was still undecided whether Josiah's efforts would end in a national reformation or not, and before Jehoiakim threw the weight of the kingly office into the opposite balance. In the present prophecy mercy is still offered to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but they reject it (^{2481B}Jeremiah 18:11,12). They have made their final choice: and thereupon follows the third prophecy of "the broken vessel" (Jeremiah 19) in which the utter overthrow of city and kingdom is foretold. We should thus place this prophecy of the potter very early in the reign of Jehoiakim; and that of the broken vessel at the commencement of his fourth year. This internal evidence is confirmed by external proof.

^{2481B}**Jeremiah 18:2.** *House* i.e., workshop. The clay-field where the potters exercised their craft lay to the south of Jerusalem just beyond the valley of Hinnom. Compare ^{2811B}Zechariah 11:13; ^{427D}Matthew 27:10.

^{2481B}**Jeremiah 18:3.** *The wheels* literally, "the two wheels." The lower one was worked by the feet to give motion to the upper one, which was a flat disc or plate of wood, on which the potter laid the clay, and moulded it with his fingers as it revolved rapidly.

^{2481B}**Jeremiah 18:6.** *So are ye in mine hand* When a vessel was ruined, the potter did not throw it away, but crushed it together, dashed it back upon the wheel, and began his work afresh, until the clay had taken the predetermined shape. It was God's purpose that Judaea should become the proper scene for the manifestation of the Messiah, and her sons be fit to receive the Saviour's teaching and carry the good tidings to all lands. If therefore at any stage of the preparation the Jewish nation took such a course as would have frustrated this purpose of Providence, it was crushed by affliction into an unresisting mass, in which the formative process began again immediately.

^{2481B}**Jeremiah 18:7,9.** *At what instant* literally, "in a moment." Here, "at one time — at another time."

Jeremiah 18:8,10. *I will repent of the evil ... I will repent of the good* All God's dealings with mankind are here declared to be conditional. God changeth not, all depends upon man's conduct.

Jeremiah 18:11. The word rendered "frame" is a present participle, and is the same which as a noun means "a potter." God declares that He is as free to do what He will with the Jews as the potter is free to shape as he will the clay.

Devise a device "I am purposing a purpose."

Jeremiah 18:12. *And they said* Better, But they say.

Imagination Or, stubbornness, see **Jeremiah 3:17.**

Jeremiah 18:13. The contrast between the chaste retirement of a virgin and Judah's eagerness after idolatry, serves to heighten the horror at her conduct.

Jeremiah 18:14. Rather, "Will the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of the field?" The meaning probably is, "Will the snow of Lebanon fail from its rocks which tower above the land of Israel?" The appeal of the prophet is to the unchangeableness of one of nature's most beautiful phenomena, the perpetual snow upon the upper summits of Lebanon.

Shall the cold ... literally, "shall the strange, i.e., foreign, "cool, down-flowing waters be plucked up?" The general sense is: God is Israel's Rock, from whom the never-failing waters flow (**Jeremiah 2:13**): but men may and do abandon the cool waters which descend front above to seek their happiness in channels of their own digging.

Jeremiah 18:15. *Because* "For." Jeremiah returns to, and continues the words of, **Jeremiah 18:13.**

Vanity A word meaning "falsehood," which signifies that the worship of idols is not merely useless but injurious.

They have caused them to stumble Judah's prophets and priests were they who made her to err (**Jeremiah 5:31**). The idols were of themselves powerless for good or evil.

In their ways ... Or, "in their ways, the everlasting paths, to walk in byways, in a road not cast up. The paths of eternity" carry back the mind

not to the immediate but to the distant past, and suggest the good old ways in which the patriarchs used to walk. The “road cast up” means one raised sufficiently to keep it out of the reach of floods etc.

Jeremiah 18:16. *Hissing* Not derision, but the drawing in of the breath quickly as men do when they shudder.

Way his head Or, “shake his head,” a sign among the Jews not of scorn but of pity. The desolation of the land of Israel is to fill people with dismay.

I will shew them the back The hiding of God’s face is the sure sign of His displeasure (**Isaiah 1:15; 59:2**).

Jeremiah 18:18. The Jews were only hardened by the foregoing prophecy, and determined to compass Jeremiah’s death. *Let us devise devices* i.e., “deliberately frame a plot” for his ruin (see **Jeremiah 18:11** note).

The law shall not perish ... As the Law of Moses was imperishable, the people probably drew the conclusion that the Levitical priesthood must also endure forever, and therefore that Jeremiah’s predictions of national ruin were blasphemous (compare **Acts 6:13,14**).

Let us smite him with the tongue Their purpose was to carry a malicious report of what he had said to king Jehoiakim, and so stir up his anger against him.

Jeremiah 18:19. *The voice* i.e., the outcry and threats.

Jeremiah 18:20. Jeremiah had been laboring earnestly to avert the ruin of his country, but the Jews treated him as farmers do some noxious animal which wastes their fields, and for which they dig pitfalls.

Jeremiah 18:21. *Pour out ... sword* literally, “pour them out upon the hands of the sword, i.e., give them up to the sword.”

Put to death Rather, slain of death. The prophet’s phrase leaves it entirely indefinite in what way the men are to die.

Jeremiah 18:22. The sack of the city follows with all the horrible cruelties practiced at such a time.

~~241823~~ **Jeremiah 18:23.** *Yet, LORD* Better, But, LORD. They conceal their plots, but God knows, and therefore must punish.

Neither blot out ... Or, “blot not out their sin from before Thy face that they may be made to stumble before Thee.”

Thus Omit this word. Since there is an acceptable time and a day of salvation, so there is a time of anger, and Jeremiah’s prayer is that God would deal with his enemies at such a time, and when therefore no mercy would be shown. On imprecations such as these, see Psalm 109 introductory note. Though they did not flow from personal vengeance, but from a pure zeal for God’s honor, yet they belong to the legal spirit of the Jewish covenant. We must not, because we have been shown a “more excellent way,” condemn too harshly that sterner spirit of justice which animated so many of the saints of the earlier dispensation.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 19

The present prophecy (Jeremiah 19—20) is to be taken in close connection with the preceding. Jeremiah chooses a vessel baked in the fire, and therefore incapable of being re-shaped (compare ^{<2480>}Jeremiah 18:1,6 notes). It is the symbol of the obdurate, of those who have taken their final form (^{<621>}Revelation 22:11). In solemn procession he must bear the vessel out to the place of doom, the valley of Gehenna. There he was to break the vessel; and just as all the art of the potter would be of no avail to restore the broken fragments, so did God proclaim the final destruction of Jerusalem such as it then was, and of that generation which inhabited it.

^{<2490>}**Jeremiah 19:1.** *Get (i.e., purchase) a potter's earthen bottle* The “bottle” was a flask with a long neck, and took its name from the noise made by liquids in running out.

The ancients These “elders” were the regularly constituted representatives of the people (see ^{<2490>}Jeremiah 29:1; ^{<04116>}Numbers 11:16), and the organization lasted down to our Saviour's time (^{<4167>}Matthew 26:47). Similarly the priests had also their representatives (^{<2190>}2 Kings 19:2). Accompanied thus by the representatives of Church and State, the prophet was to carry the earthen bottle, the symbol of their mean origin and frail existence, outside the walls of Jerusalem.

^{<2490>}**Jeremiah 19:2.** *The valley ...* See ^{<2478>}Jeremiah 7:31 note.

The east gate Others render “the pottery gate.” Two gates led into the valley of Hinnom, the Fountain-gate at the southeast corner, and the Dung-gate on the southwest side of Zion; some think that “the east gate” was neither of these, but a small or postern gate, used for throwing out rubbish, the valley having been put to this degrading use from the time that Josiah defiled it (^{<2230>}2 Kings 23:10). And thus the mean symbol of a proud nation was carried out through a back door to be broken upon the heaps of refuse already cast there.

^{<2490>}**Jeremiah 19:3.** *Kings* Plural because the message (^{<2490>}Jeremiah 19:3-9), related not especially to the reigning king, but to the whole royal house.

^{<2490>}**Jeremiah 19:4.** *Have estranged this place* They have not recognized the sanctity of this place, but have treated it as a strange place, by worshipping in it strange gods.

Innocents i.e., guiltless persons.

^{<2490>}**Jeremiah 19:7.** *Make void* The verb used here is that from which “bottle” (^{<2490>}Jeremiah 19:1) is derived, and as it represents the sound made by the water running out, it would be better translated, “pour out.” Jeremiah perhaps carried the bottle to Tophet full of water, the symbol in the East of life (^{<23816>}Isaiah 35:6; 41:18), and at these words emptied it before the assembled elders.

^{<2491>}**Jeremiah 19:11.** *Made whole again* literally, “healed.” In this lies the distinction between this symbol and that of ^{<24804>}Jeremiah 18:4. The plastic clay can be shaped and re-shaped until the potter forms with it the vessel he had predetermined: the broken bottle is of no further use, but its fragments are cast away forever upon the heaps of rubbish deposited in Tophet.

^{<2491>}**Jeremiah 19:13.** *Because of all* literally, “with reference to all,” limiting the denunciation to those houses whose roofs had been defiled with altars.

Upon whose roofs they have burned incense See ^{<22312>}2 Kings 23:12, note.

^{<24914>}**Jeremiah 19:14,15.** Since it was this repetition of the prophecy in the temple which so greatly irritated Pashur, these two verses ought to be joined to the next chapter.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 20

The breaking of the bottle (Jeremiah 20) had been done so solemnly before witnesses of such high position, and its meaning had been so unmistakably proclaimed in the temple, that those in authority could endure such proceedings no longer. Roused therefore to anger by the sight of the listening crowds, Pashur, the deputy high priest, caused Jeremiah to be arrested, inflicted upon him the legal 40 stripes except one, and made him pass a night in the stocks, exposed to the jeers of the scoffers, at the most public gate of the temple. Apparently, it was Jeremiah's last public prophecy in Jehoiakim's reign, and was the cause why in the fourth year of that king it was no longer safe for him to go to the house of Yahweh (^{<2816>}Jeremiah 36:5). It is probable also that Jehoiakim's scroll ended with the prophecy of the potter's vessel, and the account of the contumelies to which the prophet had in consequence been exposed. One prophecy, however, at least in our present book, is of a later date, that of the linen girdle (Jeremiah 13).

^{<2811>}**Jeremiah 20:1.** Pashur, the father probably of the Gedaliah mentioned in ^{<2830>}Jeremiah 38:1, was the head of the 16th course (shift) of priests (marginal reference); the other Pashur (^{<2821>}Jeremiah 21:1) belonged to the fifth course, the sons of Melchiah. Both these houses returned in great strength from the exile. See ^{<1527>}Ezra 2:37,38.

Chief governor Or, "deputy governor." The Nagid or governor of the temple was the high priest (^{<1391>}1 Chronicles 9:11), and Pashur was his Pakid, i.e., deputy (see ^{<2410>}Jeremiah 1:10 note). Zephaniah held this office (^{<2326>}Jeremiah 29:26), and his relation to the high priest is exactly defined (^{<1258>}2 Kings 25:18; ^{<2424>}Jeremiah 52:24). The Nagid at this time was Seraiah the high priest, the grandson of Hilkiah, or (possibly) Azariah, Hilkiah's son and Jeremiah's brother (^{<1363>}1 Chronicles 6:13, ^{<1570>}Ezra 7:1).

^{<2811>}**Jeremiah 20:2.** *Jeremiah the prophet* Jeremiah is nowhere so called in the first 19 chapters. In this place he thus characterizes himself, because Pashur's conduct was a violation of the respect due to the prophetic office.

The stocks This instrument of torture comes from a root signifying to "twist." It thus implies that the body was kept in a distorted position. Compare ^{<4462>}Acts 16:24.

The high gate ... Rather, “the upper gate of Benjamin in the house of Yahweh (compare ^{<2155>}2 Kings 15:35);” to be distinguished from the city gate of Benjamin leading toward the north.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 20:3.** *Magor-missabib* See ^{<2015>}Jeremiah 6:25 note.

Jeremiah uses it no less than five times, having probably adopted it as his watchword from ^{<2013>}Psalms 31:13.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 20:4.** *A terror to thyself, and to all thy friends* Jeremiah plays upon the meaning of Magor-missabib saying that Pashur would be a terror to all around. It is remarkable that he prophesies no evil of Pashur (^{<2015>}Jeremiah 20:6). His was to be the milder fate of being carried into captivity with Jehoiachin, and dying peaceably at Babylon (^{<2015>}Jeremiah 20:6), whereas his successor Zephaniah was put to death at Riblah (^{<2015>}Jeremiah 52:24,27). His punishment probably consisted in this. He had prophesied “lies.” When then he saw the dreadful slaughter of his countrymen, Jehoiakim put to death, his young son dragged into captivity, and the land stripped of all that was best, his conscience so condemned him as the guilty cause of such great misery that in the agonies of remorse he became a terror to himself and his friends.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 20:5.** *All the strength* “All the stores.”

The labors The gains of the citizens.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 20:6.** *Thou hast prophesied lies* Pushur belonged to the warlike party, whose creed it was, that Judaea by a close alliance with Egypt might resist the arms of Assyria.

^{<2015>}**Jeremiah 20:7-18.** In the rest of the chapter we have an outbreak of deep emotion, of which the first part ends in a cry of hope (^{<2015>}Jeremiah 20:13), followed nevertheless by curses upon the day of his birth. Was this the result of feelings wounded by the indignities of a public scourging and a night spent in the stocks? Or was it not the mental agony of knowing that his ministry had (as it seemed) failed? He stands indeed before the multitudes with unbending strength, warning prince and people with unwavering constancy of the national ruin that would follow necessarily upon their sins. Before God he stood crushed by the thought that he had labored in vain, and spent his strength for nothing.

It is important to notice that with this outpouring of sorrow Jeremiah's ministry virtually closed. Though he appeared again at Jerusalem toward the end of Jehoiakim's reign, yet it was no longer to say that by repentance the national ruin might be averted. During the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the die was cast, and all the prophet henceforward could do, was to alleviate a punishment that was inevitable.

Jeremiah 20:7. *Thou hast deceived me ...* What Jeremiah refers to is the joy with which he had accepted the prophetic office (²⁴¹⁵¹⁶Jeremiah 15:16), occasioned perhaps by taking the promises in ²⁴⁰¹⁸Jeremiah 1:18 too literally as a pledge that he would succeed.

Thou art stronger than I Rather, "Thou hast taken hold of me." God had taken Jeremiah in so firm a grasp that he could not escape from the necessity of prophesying. He would have resisted, but the hand of God prevailed.

I am in derision daily literally, "I am become a laughing-stock all the day, i.e., perpetually.

Jeremiah 20:8. Translate, "For as often as I speak, I must complain; I call out, Violence and spoil."

From the time Jeremiah began to prophesy, he had had reason for nothing but lamentation. Daily with louder voice and more desperate energy he must call out "violence and spoil;" as a perpetual protest against the manner in which the laws of justice were violated by powerful men among the people.

Jeremiah 20:9. Seeing that his mission was useless, Jeremiah determined to withdraw from it.

I could not stay Rather, "I prevailed not," did not succeed. See ²⁴⁰¹⁷Jeremiah 20:7.

Jeremiah 20:10. *The defaming* Rather, "the talking." The word refers to people whispering in twos and threes apart; in this case plotting against Jeremiah. Compare ⁴¹¹⁵⁸Mark 14:58.

Report ... Rather, "Do you report, and we will report him: i.e., they encourage one another to give information against Jeremiah.

My familiars literally, “the men of my peace” (^{<1940>}Psalm 41:9). In the East the usual salutation is “Peace be to thee:” and the answer, “And to thee peace.” Thus, the phrase rather means acquaintances, than familiar friends.

Enticed literally, “persuaded, misled,” the same word as “deceived” (^{<2007>}Jeremiah 20:7).” Compare ^{<4123>}Mark 12:13-17.

^{<2011>}**Jeremiah 20:11.** *A mighty terrible one* Rather, “a terrible warrior.” The mighty One (^{<2306>}Isaiah 9:6) who is on his side is a terror to them. This change of feeling was the effect of faith, enabling him to be content with calmly doing his duty, and leaving the result to God.

For ... Rather, “because they have not acted wisely (^{<2402>}Jeremiah 10:21 note), with an everlasting disgrace that shall never be forgotten.”

^{<2012>}**Jeremiah 20:12.** This verse is repeated almost verbatim from ^{<2412>}Jeremiah 11:20.

^{<2013>}**Jeremiah 20:13.** *Sing* Jeremiah’s outward circumstances remained the same, but he found peace in leaving his cause in faith to God.

^{<2014>}**Jeremiah 20:14.** This sudden outbreak of impatience after the happy faith of ^{<2013>}Jeremiah 20:13 has led to much discussion. Possibly there was more of sorrow in the words than of impatience; sorrow that the earnest labor of a life had been in vain. Yet the form of the expression is fierce and indignant; and the impatience of Jeremiah is that part of his character which is most open to blame. He does not reach that elevation which is set before us by Him who is the perfect pattern of all righteousness. Our Lord was a prophet whose mission to the men of His generation equally failed, and His sorrow was even more deep; but it never broke forth in imprecations. See ^{<2194>}Luke 19:41,42.

^{<2016>}**Jeremiah 20:16.** *The cry* is the sound of the lamentation (^{<2018>}Jeremiah 20:8); “the shouting” is the alarm of war.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 21

With the last verse of Jeremiah 20 ended the scroll of Jehoiakim: with the first verse of Jeremiah 21 begins a digest of various prophecies (Jeremiah 21—24) addressed to Zedekiah in his ninth year, and called Zedekiah's scroll. The occasion of this prophecy was the embassy sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah, asking his prayers when the Chaldaean army was advancing upon Jerusalem. So clearly did the prophet foresee the result that he could give the king no hope. His answer, contained in the scroll, divides itself into two parts, in the first (Jeremiah 20—22), the prophet reviews the conduct of the royal house: in the second (²²³⁹Jeremiah 23:9-40), that of the priests and prophets; closing with a vision (Jeremiah 24) in which he shows the pitiable condition of Zedekiah and his people.

²²⁰¹**Jeremiah 21:1.** By sending this embassy Zedekiah acknowledged that Jeremiah held the same position in the kingdom which Isaiah had held under Hezekiah (²²⁰²2 Kings 19:2). Pashur and Zephaniah belonged to the party who were for resisting Nebuchadnezzar by force of arms.

²²⁰¹**Jeremiah 21:2.** *Nebuchadrezzar* A more correct way of spelling the name than Nebuchadnezzar.

According to all his wondrous works The king and his envoys expected some such answer as Isaiah had given on a former occasion (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 37:6).

²²⁰⁴**Jeremiah 21:4.** *Without the walls* These words are to be joined to wherewith ye fight.

²²⁰⁵**Jeremiah 21:6.** *A great pestilence* As the result of the excessive crowding of men and animals in a confined space with all sanitary regulations utterly neglected.

²²⁰⁸**Jeremiah 21:8.** Compare the marginal reference; but here the alternative is a life saved by desertion to the enemy, or a death by famine, pestilence, and the sword within the walls.

²²⁰⁹**Jeremiah 21:9.** *He that ... falleth to the Chaldeans* This was to counsel desertion, and would have been treason in an ordinary man: but the prophets Spoke with an authority above that even of the king, and

constantly interfered in political matters with summary decisiveness. Compare ^{<424f>}Matthew 24:16-18.

A prey Something not a man's own, upon which he seizes in the midst of danger, and hurries away with it. So must the Jews hurry away with their lives as something more than they had a right to, and place them in the Chaldaean camp as in a place of safety.

^{<2211>}**Jeremiah 21:11.** *Rather, And as to the royal house of Judah, Hear ye* Omit say. The words are no command to the prophet, but form his introduction to the discourse which extends to the end of ^{<2238>}Jeremiah 23:8. The king and his officers are to hear the gist of all the messages sent to the royal house since the accession of Jehoiakim.

^{<2212>}**Jeremiah 21:12.** *Execute judgment* As the administration of justice was performed in old time in person, the weal of the people depended to a great degree upon the personal qualities of the king (see ^{<1054>}2 Samuel 15:4). And as "the oppressor" was generally some powerful noble, it was especially the king's duty to see that the weaker members of the community were not wronged.

^{<2213>}**Jeremiah 21:13.** *Inhabitant* is feminine, the population of Jerusalem being always personified as a woman, the daughter of Zion. Omit and. Jerusalem is at once a valley and a rock (^{<2478>}Jeremiah 17:3). The people are described as priding themselves on the impregnability of their city.

^{<2214>}**Jeremiah 21:14.** *The forest* This suggested to the Jew the idea of everything grand and stately.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 22

This prophecy (Jeremiah 22), like the preceding (^{<2111>}Jeremiah 21:11-14), states the conditions upon which it was still possible for the house of David to ensure a long era of prosperity. It belongs therefore to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign.

^{<221>}**Jeremiah 22:1.** *Go down* i.e., from the temple to the king's house. Compare ^{<4231>}2 Chronicles 23:20.

^{<2216>}**Jeremiah 22:6.** Omit and. "Thou art a Gilead unto me, a summit of Lebanon."

Yet surely literally, if not, the form of an oath with the imprecation omitted. For the full form see ^{<04423>}Numbers 14:23.

A wilderness, and cities Omit and. The meaning is: If the house of David does not hear God's words, though it be now grand as Lebanon, God will make it a wilderness, even uninhabited cities; the house of David being regarded as equivalent to the kingdom of Judah.

^{<2217>}**Jeremiah 22:7.** *Prepare* i.e., consecrate, see ^{<2104>}Jeremiah 6:4 note.

Thy choice cedars The chief members of the royal lineage and the leading officers of state.

^{<2210>}**Jeremiah 22:10-12.** In the two foregoing prophecies Jeremiah stated the general principle on which depend the rise and downfall of kings and nations. He now adds for Zedekiah's warning the history of three thrones which were not established.

The first is that of Shallum the successor of Josiah, who probably took the name of Jehoahaz on his accession (see the marginal references notes).

^{<2210>}**Jeremiah 22:10.** *The dead* i.e., Josiah (^{<4455>}2 Chronicles 35:25). *That goeth away* Rather, that is gone away.

^{<2213>}**Jeremiah 22:13.** Far worse is the second example. Shallum was no heartless tyrant like Jehoiakim, who lived in splendor amid the misery of the nation, and perished so little cared for that his body was cast aside without burial.

His chambers Really, his upper chambers. From the absence of machinery the raising of materials for the upper stories was a difficult task, especially when massive stones were used.

His work Giveth him not his wages.

^{<2214>}**Jeremiah 22:14** *Large chambers* spacious upper chambers.

It is cieled Or, roofing it.

Vermilion The pigment which gives the deep red color still bright and untarnished on many ancient buildings.

^{<2215>}**Jeremiah 22:15.** i.e., Will thy buildings make thy reign continue? These words imply that Jehoiakim was looking forward to, and taking measures to secure, a long continuance of power (compare ^{<3119>}Habakkuk 2:9-13. If so, Jeremiah probably wrote this prophecy before Jehoiakim revolted (^{<1241>}2 Kings 24:1); and it, therefore, probably belongs to the same date as ^{<4851>}Jeremiah 36:30, written in the interval between Nebuchadnezzar's first conquest of Jerusalem, and Jehoiakim's rebellion, and when Jeremiah was out of the reach of the tyrant's power.

Closest thyself in cedar Rather, viest "in cedar;" i.e., viest with Solomon.

Did not thy father eat and drink ... i.e., he was prosperous and enjoyed life. There is a contrast between the life of Josiah spent in the discharge of his kingly duties, and that of Jehoiakim, busy with ambitious plans of splendor and aggrandisement.

^{<2217>}**Jeremiah 22:17.** *Covetousness* literally, gain. Besides exacting forced labor Jehoiakim, to procure the necessary means for the vast expenses he incurred, put innocent people to death on various pretexts, and escheated their property.

^{<2218>}**Jeremiah 22:18.** Boldly by name is the judgment at length pronounced upon Jehoiakim. Dreaded by all around him, he shall soon lie an unheeded corpse, with no one to lament. No loving relative shall make such wailing as when a brother or sister is carried to the grave; nor shall he have the respect of his subjects, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory!

^{<3219>}**Jeremiah 22:19.** *The burial of an ass* i.e., he shall merely be dragged out of the way, and left to decay unheeded. Nothing is known of the fulfillment of this prophecy.

^{<3221>}**Jeremiah 22:20.** The third example, Jehoiachin. With him all the best and noblest of the land were dragged from their homes to people the void places of Babylon.

The passages Really, Abarim, a range of mountains to the south of Gilead, opposite Jericho (see ^{<0272>}Numbers 27:12; ^{<6349>}Deuteronomy 32:49). Jeremiah names the chief ranges of mountains, which overlook the route from Jerusalem to Babylon, in regular order, beginning with Lebanon upon the north, then Bashan on the northeast, and lastly Abarim on the southeast.

Thy lovers i.e., the nations in alliance with Judah, especially Egypt, whose defeat at Carchemish (^{<2442>}Jeremiah 46:2) gave all western Asia into the power of Nebuchadnezzar.

^{<3221>}**Jeremiah 22:21.** *Prosperity* literally, as in the margin. God spake thus not once only, but whenever Judah was at peace.

^{<3222>}**Jeremiah 22:22.** *Shall eat up all thy pastors* literally, shall depasture (^{<2416>}Jeremiah 2:16 note) thy pastors. Those who used to drive their flocks to consume the herbage shall themselves be the first prey of war. The “pastors” mean not the kings only, but all in authority.

^{<3223>}**Jeremiah 22:23.** Lebanon is the usual metaphor for anything splendid. and is here put for Jerusalem, but with special reference to the kings whose pride it was to dwell in palaces roofed with cedar (^{<3224>}Jeremiah 22:14).

How gracious shalt thou be Or, How wilt thou groan!

^{<3224>}**Jeremiah 22:24.** The words “king of Judah,” belong to Coniah, and prove that he was king regnant when the prophet wrote. The prophet gives him the name by which he was known when in a private station (^{<1316>}1 Chronicles 3:16) as he had done previously with Jehoahaz. These two kings bore their royal names for so short a time that they probably never got into general use.

The signet The badge of office. To part with it, was to part with the royal authority.

^{<226>}**Jeremiah 22:26.** *Mother* See ^{<2138>}Jeremiah 13:18. It was her relationship, not to the dead king, but to the king regnant, which made her powerful.

^{<228>}**Jeremiah 22:28.** *Idol* Rather, vessel. Is Coniah a mere piece of common earthenware in which the potter has no pleasure, and therefore breaks it? It is a lamentation over Jehoiachin's hard fate, and that of his seed. This and the two following verses may have been written after the king had been carried into captivity.

^{<229>}**Jeremiah 22:29.** *Earth* On the repetition compare ^{<204>}Jeremiah 7:4 note.

^{<230>}**Jeremiah 22:30.** *Childless* No child to sit on David's throne. See ^{<337>}1 Chronicles 3:17 note.

Jeconiah was the last king of David's line. His uncle indeed actually reigned after him, but perished with his sons long before Jeconiah's death (literally 10): and yet from so dead a trunk, from a family so utterly fallen, that spiritual King came forth whose name is "Yahweh our righteousness" (^{<235>}Jeremiah 23:5,6).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 23

Jeremiah 23:1. *The pastors* shepherds, i.e., civil rulers (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 2:8).

The sheep of My pasture literally, of My pasturing, the sheep of whom I am shepherd. The people do not belong to the rulers but to God.

Jeremiah 23:2. They had scattered them first spiritually by leading them into idolatry; and secondly, many had literally been taken to Egypt with Jehoahaz, many in Jehoiakim's time had fled there, while others fell away to the Chaldaeans: and finally the best of the land had been carried to Babylon with Jeconiah.

Driven away i.e., made them outcasts. In the East, shepherds never drive their flocks, but go ahead of them (⁶¹⁰⁴John 10:4,5).

Have not visited them i.e., have not concerned yourselves about their conduct.

Jeremiah 23:3. While there is no promise of restoration for the kings, there is for the people (see ²⁴²⁷Jeremiah 4:27), because they had been led astray by their rulers.

Have driven them The evil shepherds drove the people into exile by leading them into sin: and God by inflicting punishment.

Their folds Or, their pastures.

Jeremiah 23:4. *Shepherds* Men like Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Maccabees, raised up especially by God. It is a revocation of the promise made to David (¹⁰⁷²2 Samuel 7:12-16) so far as the earthly throne was concerned.

They shall fear no more ... The effect of good government will be general security.

Neither shall they be lacking Not one sheep shall be missing or lost.

Jeremiah 23:5. Even with the temporal kingship abolished, David's mercies are still sure.

A righteous Branch Or, sprout, germ (see ^{230D}Isaiah 4:2 note). The sprout is that in which the root springs up and grows, and which, if it be destroyed, makes the root perish also.

And a king shall reign ... Rather, and he shall reign as king. David's family is to be dethroned (temporally), that it may reign gloriously (spiritually). But compare ²⁴³⁷Jeremiah 33:17,26 notes.

²²⁷⁶**Jeremiah 23:6.** *This is his name whereby he shall be called* From remote antiquity the person here spoken of has been understood to be "the righteous germ," and this alone is in accordance with the grammar and the sense. Nevertheless, because Jeremiah (²⁴³⁵Jeremiah 33:15,16) applies the name also to Jerusalem, some understand it of Israel.

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS Messiah is here called:

(1) Yahweh, and

(2) our righteousness, because He justifies us by His merits.

Some render, He by whom Yahweh works righteousness. Righteousness is in that case personal holiness, which is the work of the Spirit after justification.

²²⁷⁹**Jeremiah 23:9.** *Because of the prophets* Rather, concerning "the prophets." These words should come first, as being the title of this portion of the prophecy (²⁴³⁹Jeremiah 23:9-40).

²²³⁰**Jeremiah 23:10.** *Because of swearing* Rather, because of the curse denounced against sin (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 11:3). The mourning probably refers to the drought (²⁴²⁴Jeremiah 12:4).

The pleasant places "Pastures."

Their course Their mode of life.

Their force is not right "Their heroism," that on which they pride themselves as mighty men, "is not right," is wrong (see ²⁴⁸⁶Jeremiah 8:6 note).

²²³¹**Jeremiah 23:11.** *For both prophet and priest are profane* While by their office they are consecrated to God, they have made themselves common and unholy by their sins. See ²⁴⁸⁸Jeremiah 3:9 note.

Yea, in my house This may refer to sins such as those of the sons of Eli (⁴⁰²²1 Samuel 2:22), or that they had defiled the temple by idolatrous rites.

⁴²³²**Jeremiah 23:12.** Every word denotes the certainty of their fall.

“Their path is like slippery places in darkness:” and on this path “they are pushed with violence.” External circumstances assist in urging on to ruin those who choose the path of vice.

⁴²³³**Jeremiah 23:13.** *And I have seen folly ...* Rather, “Also I have seen.” The prophet contrasts the prophets of Samaria with those of Jerusalem. In the conduct of the former God saw folly (literally that which is insipid, as being unsalted). It was stupidity to prophesy by Baal, an idol.

In Baal i.e., in the name of Baal.

⁴²³⁴**Jeremiah 23:14.** Rather, “But in the prophets of Jerusalem” etc. Their conduct is more strongly condemned than that of the Baal-priests.

They strengthen ... First by neglecting to warn and rebuke sinners: secondly by the direct influence of their bad example.

They are all of them They have become, “all of them,” i.e., the people of Jerusalem, and not the prophets only.

⁴²³⁵**Jeremiah 23:15.** *Profaneness* Desecration.

⁴²³⁶**Jeremiah 23:16.** How were the people to know the false prophets from the true? The former bring a message that fills with vain hopes, or “speak a vision” out of their own invention.

⁴²³⁷**Jeremiah 23:17.** *Still* “Continually.” This verse gives the chief test by which the false prophet is to be detected, namely, that his predictions violate the laws of morality.

⁴²³⁸**Jeremiah 23:18.** The prophet now applies this test to the circumstances of the times. A whirlwind has already gone forth (⁴²³⁹Jeremiah 23:19). Had these false prophets stood in God’s secret “Council” (so in ⁴²⁴⁰Jeremiah 23:22), they like Jeremiah would have labored to avert the danger by turning men from their evil way.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:19.** Rather, “Behold, the tempest of Yahweh, even hot anger hath gone forth and a whirlwind shall burst upon the head of the wicked.”

☞ **Jeremiah 23:20.** *The latter days* The proper and final development of any event or series of events. Thus, the expression is used of the Christian dispensation as the full development of the Jewish Church. Here it means the destruction of Jerusalem, as the result of the sins of the Jews.

Consider Rather, understand. When Jerusalem is destroyed, the exiles—taught by adversity—will understand that it was sin which brought ruin upon their country.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:21.** *Ran* i.e., hurried to take upon them the responsibilities of the prophetic office.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:22.** *They should have turned them ...* The work of the true prophet, which is to turn men from evil unto good.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:23.** *At hand* Or, near. An appeal to the omnipotence of God in demonstration of the wickedness of the prophets. His power is not limited, so that He can notice only things close to Him, but is universal.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:25.** In ☞ Deuteronomy 13:1 “a dreamer of dreams” is used in a bad sense, and with reason. God communicating His will by dreams was a thing too easy to counterfeit for it not to be misused.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:26.** Some translate, “How long? Is it in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies, and prophesy the deceit of their heart—do they purpose to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they tell one to another?”

☞ **Jeremiah 23:27.** *To his neighbor* i.e., to one another, to the people about him, to anyone.

As their father’s ... Rather, “as their fathers forgot My name through Baal.” The superstition which attaches importance to dreams keeps God as entirely out of men’s minds as absolute idolatry.

☞ **Jeremiah 23:28.** *A dream ... faithfully* Rather, as “a dream” ... as truth. The dream is but a dream, and is to be told as such, but God’s word is to be spoken as certain and absolute truth.

The dreams are the chaff, worthless, with nothing in them; the wheat, the pure grain after it is cleansed and winnowed is God's word. What have these two in common?

Jeremiah 23:29. *Like as a fire* God's word is the great purifier which destroys all that is false and leaves, only the genuine metal. Compare Hebrews 4:12.

Like a hammer ... God's word rouses and strengthens the conscience and crushes within the heart everything that is evil.

Jeremiah 23:30. Jeremiah gives in succession the main characteristics of the teaching of the false prophets. The first is that they steal God's words from one another. Having no message from God, they try to imitate the true prophets.

Jeremiah 23:31. *That use their tongues* literally, that take their tongues. Their second characteristic. They have no message from God, but they take their tongues, their only implement, and say, He saith, using the solemn formula by which Yahweh affirms the truth of His words. Solemn asseverations seemed to give reality to their emptiness.

Jeremiah 23:32. The third characteristic. See Jeremiah 23:25.

Lightness Vain, empty, talk.

Jeremiah 23:33. *Burden* Here a prophecy, either

(1) as being something weighty: or

(2) a something said aloud.

Isaiah brought the word into general use: Jeremiah never used it, though his predictions were all of impending evil. The false prophets, however, applied it in derision to Jeremiah's prophecies, playing upon its double sense, and so turning solemn realities into mockery (see Jeremiah 23:34).

What burden? Or, according to another reading, Ye are the burden.

I will even forsake you Rather, and I will cast you away. From the idea of a burden the thought naturally arises of refusing to bear it, and throwing it off.

~~23:35~~ **Jeremiah 23:35.** The proper words for prophecy. It is to be called an answer when the people have come to inquire of Yahweh: but His word when it is sent unasked.

~~23:36~~ **Jeremiah 23:36.** *Every man's word ...* Rather, every man's burden shall be his word; i.e., his mocking use of the word "burden" shall weigh him down and crush him.

Perverted i.e., put into a ridiculous light.

~~23:38~~ **Jeremiah 23:38.** *Since* Or, But if ye say.

~~23:39~~ **Jeremiah 23:39.** Translate, "Therefore, behold, I will even take you up (or will burden you), and I will cast you, and the city which I gave you and your fathers, out of my presence."

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 24

This prophecy (Jeremiah 24) is the final outcome of what has gone before. Never perhaps has a reigning king been addressed in such contemptuous terms. When Jeconiah was carried to Babylon, Zedekiah, the priests, prophets, and people of Jerusalem congratulated themselves upon being saved from such a fate: really all that was good among them was then culled out, and placed in safety; and they were left behind because they were not worth the taking.

Jeremiah 24:1. Omit “were.” “Set before,” i.e. put in the appointed place for offerings of firstfruits in the forecourt of the temple.

Carpenters “Craftsmen” (see the marginal reference).

Jeremiah 24:2. Fig-trees bear three crops of figs, of which the first is regarded as a great delicacy.

Jeremiah 24:4-10. The complete fulfillment of this prophecy belongs to the Christian Church. There is a close analogy between Jeremiah at the first destruction of Jerusalem and our Lord at the second. There the good figs were those converts picked out by the preaching of Christ and the Apostles; the bad figs were the mass of the people left for Titus and the Romans to destroy.

Jeremiah 24:5. *Acknowledge ... for their good* Specially their spiritual good. Put a comma after Chaldaeans.

Jeremiah 24:8. *That dwell in the land of Egypt* Neither those carried captive with Jehoahaz into Egypt, nor those who fled there, are to share in these blessings. The new life of the Jewish nation is to be the work only of the exiles in Babylon.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 25

It was immediately after the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.) between Egypt and Babylon, and probably before Nebuchadnezzar and his victorious army appeared in Palestine, that Jeremiah delivered this prophecy (Jeremiah 25), orally perhaps at first to the people, but soon afterward committed to writing; it formed part of Jehoiakim's scroll (^{<2452>}Jeremiah 36:29). It belongs to the year of Jeremiah's greatest activity, when he was using his utmost efforts to detach Jehoiakim from Egypt, and prevail upon him to accept frankly the position of a king subject to Nebuchadnezzar, not only as a matter of policy but of religious duty. It was this latter aspect of the appeal that made the king reject it. He burned the prophet's scroll, tried to slay the prophet, and heard the voice of God no more during the rest of his reign.

^{<251>}**Jeremiah 25:1.** *The fourth year* See ^{<2001>}Daniel 1:1 note. This invasion of Judaea, in which Daniel was carried captive to Babylon, was according to the date of the years the fourth, but according to the actual time the third, year of the Jewish king. Nebuchadnezzar was not yet fully king, but associated with his father Nabopolassar.

^{<252>}**Jeremiah 25:3.** *The three and twentieth year* i.e., nineteen under Josiah, and four under Jehoiakim. This prophecy divides itself into three parts,

(1) the judgment of Judah (^{<2518>}Jeremiah 25:3-11), and Babylon's doom (^{<2512>}Jeremiah 25:12-14);

(2) the wine-cup of fury (^{<2515>}Jeremiah 25:15-29);

(3) the judgment of the world (^{<2530>}Jeremiah 25:30-38).

^{<2516>}**Jeremiah 25:5.** *Turn ye* i.e., Repent ye; the great summons of God to mankind at all times (^{<2447>}Luke 24:47; ^{<4138>}Acts 2:38; compare ^{<4182>}Matthew 3:2).

^{<2519>}**Jeremiah 25:9.** The term families is probably used here to signify the widespread empire of Nebuchadnezzar.

My servant This title, so remarkable in the Old Testament as the especial epithet, first of Moses, and then of the Messiah, is thrice given to Nebuchadnezzar, and marks the greatness of the commission entrusted to him.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 25:10.** *Take from them ... the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle* (or, lamp). To denote the entire cessation of domestic life. The one was the sign of the preparation of the daily meal, the other of the assembling of the family after the labors of the day were over.

²⁵¹¹**Jeremiah 25:11.** *Seventy years* The duration of the Babylonian empire was really a little short of this period. But the 70 years are usually calculated down to the time when the Jews were permitted to return to their country (compare ²⁵¹⁰Jeremiah 29:10).

²⁵¹²**Jeremiah 25:12.** *Perpetual desolations* The ruins of Babylon form its only lasting memorial.

²⁵¹³**Jeremiah 25:13.** The Septuagint places a full stop after “book,” and take the rest as a title “what Jeremiah prophesied against the nations,” which series there immediately follows. In the Masoretic Text, this series is deferred to the end (Jeremiah 46—49), and with Jeremiah 50—51, forms one entire series. Other reasons make it probable that the Septuagint has preserved for us an earlier text, in which all direct mention of the king of Babylon is omitted and the 70 years are given as the duration of Judah’s captivity, and not of the Babylonian empire. The fuller text of the Masorites is to be explained by the dislocation which Jehoiakim’s scroll evidently suffered.

²⁵¹⁴**Jeremiah 25:14.** *Shall serve themselves of them also* i.e., shall impose forced labor upon the Chaldeans, and reduce them also to servitude.

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 25:15.** *Saith* Or, hath said. This prophecy — placed by the Septuagint after those against the nations — forms an impressive statement of the manner in which the new kingdom of Babylon was to execute Yahweh’s wrath upon the nations far and near.

²⁵¹⁶**Jeremiah 25:16.** *Be moved* Rather, stagger.

²⁵¹⁷**Jeremiah 25:17.** *Then took I the cup* Not actually offering the wine-cup — Holy Scripture has suffered much from this materialistic way of explaining it: but publicly proclaiming this prophecy in Jerusalem, as the central spot of God's dealings with men, and leaving it to find its way to the neighboring states.

²⁵¹⁸**Jeremiah 25:18.** *As it is this day* Words omitted by the Septuagint, and probably added by Jeremiah after the murder of Gedaliah had completed the ruin of the land.

²⁵¹⁹**Jeremiah 25:19.** The arrangement is remarkable. Jeremiah begins with the south, Egypt; next Uz on the southeast, and Philistia on the southwest; next, Edom, Moab, and Ammon on the east, and Tyre, and Sidon, and the isles of the Mediterranean on the west; next, in the Far East, various Arabian nations, then northward to Media and Elam, and finally the kings of the north far and near.

²⁵²⁰**Jeremiah 25:20.** *The mingled people* Either auxiliaries; or, rather, a constituent portion of the people of Egypt, who were not of pure blood.

Azzah i.e., Gaza.

The remnant of Ashdod A sentence which none but a contemporary writer could have used. Psammetichus, after a siege of 29 years, had captured and destroyed Ashdod, except for a feeble remnant.

²⁵²¹**Jeremiah 25:22.** *The isles* Rightly explained in the margin; it probably refers here to Cyprus.

²⁵²²**Jeremiah 25:23.** *Dedan* See the ²³¹³Isaiah 21:13 note.

Buz See Job. 32:2 note.

All that are ... See the marginal reference note.

²⁵²³**Jeremiah 25:24.** *Arabia* That part which bordered on Palestine, and was inhabited mainly by Ishmaelites.

The mingled people Compare the ²⁵²⁰Jeremiah 25:20 note. In Arabia there seem to have been many tribes of Cushite origin, who by intermarriage with other tribes had become of mixed blood.

^{<2457>}**Jeremiah 25:25.** *Zimri* Probably a district between Arabia and Persia. “Elam” is put in Scripture for the whole of Persia.

^{<2458>}**Jeremiah 25:26.** *All the kingdoms of the world ...* In accordance with the usage of Holy Scripture this universality is limited. It is moral and not geographical.

Sheshach Jerome says that this is the name Babel written in cypher, the letters being transposed. Another example occurs in ^{<2500>}Jeremiah 51:1, where the words “the heart of my risers up” become the Chaldaeans. The Septuagint omits the clause containing the name.

^{<2459>}**Jeremiah 25:27.** The metaphors denote the helplessness to which the nations are reduced by drinking the wine-cup of fury (^{<2455>}Jeremiah 25:15).

^{<2460>}**Jeremiah 25:30.** Yahweh has risen like a lion from His covert, and at His roaring the whole world is filled with terror and confusion.

Upon his habitation Against His pasture; i.e., Judaea. Yahweh comes forth as the lion to destroy the sheep which lie terrified within the circle of the tents.

A shout The vintage-shout, here used for the war-cry. Compare ^{<2360>}Isaiah 16:9; 63:3.

^{<2461>}**Jeremiah 25:31.** *A noise* The trampling of an army in motion. Compare ^{<3000>}Amos 2:2.

A controversy i.e., a suit at law.

Will plead Or, will hold judgment. As judge He delivers the wicked to the sword.

^{<2462>}**Jeremiah 25:32.** *A great whirlwind* Or, storm.

The coasts of the earth See ^{<2402>}Jeremiah 6:22 note. The thunderstorm seen first on the edge of the horizon overspreads the heaven, and travels from nation to nation in its destructive course.

^{<2463>}**Jeremiah 25:33.** *Lamented* See the marginal reference and ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 8:2.

☞ **Jeremiah 25:34-36.** *Principal of the flock* i.e., noble ones.

Wallow yourselves in the ashes Rather, roll yourselves on the ground.

For ... Read; “for your days for being slaughtered are accomplished, and I will scatter you” (or, (dash you in pieces).

Fall like a pleasant vessel The comparison suggests the idea of change from a thing of value into worthless fragments.

☞ **Jeremiah 25:36.** *Hath spoiled* Or, spoileth.

☞ **Jeremiah 25:37.** *The peaceable habitations* The pastures of peace, the peaceable fields where the flocks lately dwelt in security. See

☞ Jeremiah 25:30 note.

☞ **Jeremiah 25:38.** Yahweh has risen up, like a lion that leaves its covert, eager for prey, that He may execute judgment upon the wicked.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 26

Jeremiah 26 is a narrative of the danger to which Jeremiah was exposed by reason of the prophecy contained in Jeremiah 7 and should be read in connection with it. ^{<2604>}Jeremiah 26:4-6 contain a summary of the prediction contained in Jeremiah 7, and that again is but an outline of what was a long address.

^{<2609>}**Jeremiah 26:9.** The charge against Jeremiah was that of prophesying falsely, for which the penalty was death (^{<1580>}Deuteronomy 18:20). They assumed that it was absolutely impossible that Jerusalem ever could become like Shiloh.

Against Jeremiah unto Jeremiah. They regularly constituted themselves a congregation to take part in his trial.

^{<2610>}**Jeremiah 26:10.** *The princes of Judah* The priests could scourge a man etc., but could not then try him for his life, as the Sanhedrim subsequently did until the Romans deprived them of the power.

The new gate That built by Jotham (^{<1255>}2 Kings 15:35), and probably a usual place for trials.

^{<2611>}**Jeremiah 26:11.** *This man is worthy to die* literally, A sentence of death is to this man, i.e., is his desert.

^{<2612>}**Jeremiah 26:12-15.** The answer of Jeremiah is simple and straightforward. Yahweh, he affirmed, had truly sent him, but the sole object of his prophesying had been to avert the evil by leading them to repentance. If they would amend their ways God would deliver them from the threatened doom. As for himself he was in their hands, but if they put him to death they would bring the guilt of shedding innocent blood upon themselves and upon the city.

^{<2616>}**Jeremiah 26:16.** *This man ...* literally, There is not to this man a sentence of death, i.e., he is acquitted by the princes and the congregation.

^{<2617>}**Jeremiah 26:17.** *The elders of the land* The heads and spokesmen of the congregation, who added their approval after the princes who represented the king had given their decision.

^{<2899>}**Jeremiah 26:19.** *Thus might we procure ...* Rather, And we should commit a great evil against our own souls; i.e., by putting Jeremiah to death, we should commit a sin which would prove a great misfortune to ourselves.

^{<2901>}**Jeremiah 26:20.** This narrative of Urijah's fate was no part of the speech of the elders, who would not be likely to contrast the behavior of the reigning king so unfavorably with that of Hezekiah. Moreover, it would have been a precedent, not for acquitting Jeremiah, but for putting him to death. Jeremiah, when he reduced the narrative to writing, probably added this history to show the ferocity of Jehoiakim, and the danger to which he had been himself exposed.

^{<2902>}**Jeremiah 26:21.** *His mighty men* The commanders of his army; the princes are the civil officers.

^{<2903>}**Jeremiah 26:22.** *Elnathan* Possibly the king's father-in-law (^{<1218>}2 Kings 24:8).

^{<2904>}**Jeremiah 26:23.** *Out of Egypt* As Jehoiakim was a vassal of Egypt, he would easily obtain the surrender of a man accused of treason.

^{<2905>}**Jeremiah 26:24.** *Ahikam* See the marginal reference. His son Gemariah lent Jeremiah his room for the public reading of Jehoiakim's scroll, and another son Gedaliah was made governor of the land by the Chaldaeans (^{<2894>}Jeremiah 39:14); the family probably shared the political views of Jeremiah.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 27

In Jeremiah 27—29 we see with what energy, and yet thoughtfulness, Jeremiah enforced the lessons of Jeremiah 25. These chapters belong to the first four years of Zedekiah.

The spelling of certain proper names in these chapters has led some to argue that they were revised and corrected in Ezra's time, if not by Ezra himself. Others think the fact of no importance whatever.

Jeremiah 27:1. *Of Jehoiakim* Really, of Zedekiah, as the Syriac reads (see ^{<271>}Jeremiah 27:3). In the Septuagint the verse is missing. Some scribe has confused the title of this chapter with that of Jeremiah 26.

Jeremiah 27:2. *Yokes* Two curved pieces of wood, the one put over the neck of the ox, the other under, and then fastened together by bonds or cords (compare ^{<191>}Psalms 2:3). Compare the marginal references.

Jeremiah 27:3. *Come* Or, are come. The ambassadors of these five kings had probably come to Jerusalem to consult about forming a league to throw off the Babylonian supremacy. The attempt failed.

Jeremiah 27:7. *His son, and his son's son* Evil-Merodach and Nabonadius (see ^{<271>}Daniel 5:1 note).

Shall serve themselves of him See the marginal reference. After long servitude to the Persian and Median kings, the Selucidæ ruined the remains of Babylon.

Jeremiah 27:9. *Dreamers* literally, as in the margin. People dream dreams for themselves, and go to diviners to ask the explanation of them.

Jeremiah 27:10. *To remove you far ...* That would be the result of their vaticinations.

Jeremiah 27:11. *Nations ...* Rather, the nation.

Jeremiah 27:13-15. Zedekiah was restless under the Babylonian yoke, and the false prophets found only too ready a hearing from him. He is addressed in the plural because his feelings were fully shared by the mass of the officers of state and by the people.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 28

^{<28:1>}**Jeremiah 28:1.** *In the beginning ... Zedekiah* Probably a gloss put into the margin to explain “the same year,” from where it has crept into the text.

Gibeon A city of priests (^{<02:17>}Joshua 21:17). Hananiah was probably a priest as well as a prophet. He chose either a Sabbath or a new moon, that he might confront Jeremiah not only in the presence of the priests, but also of all the people. He used (^{<28:2>}Jeremiah 28:2) the solemn formula which claims direct inspiration.

^{<28:3>}**Jeremiah 28:3.** *Within two full years* literally, In yet two years even days. Hananiah probably was induced to fix this date by the expectation that the confederacy then on foot would defeat Nebuchadnezzar.

^{<28:4>}**Jeremiah 28:4.** *Jeconiah* Zedekiah not being popular, the people would have preferred the young king, who had not reigned long enough to make enemies. Probably also Zedekiah had started for Babylon (^{<25:19>}Jeremiah 51:59).

^{<28:6-9>}**Jeremiah 28:6-9.** Jeremiah’s own wishes concurred with Hananiah’s prediction, but asserts that that prediction was at variance with the language of the older prophets.

^{<28:9>}**Jeremiah 28:9.** *Then shall the prophet ...* Or, “shall be known as the prophet whom the LORD hath truly sent.”

^{<28:10>}**Jeremiah 28:10.** The multitude would see in Hananiah’s act a symbol of deliverance.

^{<28:16>}**Jeremiah 28:16.** *I will cast thee* Rather, I send thee away. God had not sent Hananiah to prophesy, but He does now send him away to die.

Taught rebellion As Nebuchadnezzar was Yahweh’s servant, to teach rebellion against him was to teach rebellion against his Master.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 29

Appended to this history of the struggle with the false prophets at home is a letter addressed to the exiles at Babylon (Jeremiah 29). There was at Babylon as at Jerusalem the same determination of the Jews never to submit quietly to a foreign rule. This Jeremiah sought to quell. His words found credence, but not without resistance on the part of the false prophets.

Jeremiah 29:1. *The residue of the elders* i.e., such of the elders as were still alive.

Jeremiah 29:2. *The queen* The queen-mother.

Jeremiah 29:3. *Elasah* Probably brother of Ahikam (**Jeremiah 26:24**), and therefore an acceptable person at the Chaldaean court. As Zedekiah had to go in person to Babylon in his fourth year (**Jeremiah 51:59**), this embassy was probably sent two or three years earlier. Its date, however, was subsequent to the vision in Jeremiah 24. It is appended therefore to Jeremiah 28, not as later in point of time, but because of the similarity of subject.

Jeremiah 29:4-7. As the exile was God's doing for their good, they were to make the best of their position, and acquire wealth and influence; whereas if they were always restlessly looking out for the opportunity of returning home, they would rapidly fall into poverty and dwindle away.

Jeremiah 29:7. *Seek the peace of the city ...* Not only because their welfare for seventy years was bound up with that of Babylon, but because it would have degraded their whole moral nature to have lived as conspirators, banded together against the country that was for the time their home.

Jeremiah 29:8. *Your prophets and your diviners* The evils from which the people had suffered so cruelly at home followed them in their exile.

Dreams which ye cause to be dreamed As long as there was a market for dreams, so long there would be plenty of impostors to supply them.

^{<2910>}**Jeremiah 29:10.** *After seventy years* literally, according to the measure of the fulfillment of 70 years for Babylon. The 70 years (^{<2951>}Jeremiah 25:11 note) are primarily the length of the Babylonian empire, and only in a secondary sense that of the Jewish exile.

^{<2911>}**Jeremiah 29:11.** *An expected end* Rather, a future and a hope. The nation shall not come to an end; the exile shall be followed by a restoration.

^{<2914>}**Jeremiah 29:14.** *Turn away your captivity* Or, “restore your prosperity.”

^{<2916>}**Jeremiah 29:16-20.** These verses are not in the Septuagint. But the text of the Septuagint is here throughout so brief and confused as to be explicable only on the supposition, that it represents what was left behind in Egypt when Jeremiah died, copied probably with extreme haste, and with no opportunity of careful collation afterward. On the other hand the Hebrew text represents no hurried transcript, but the original manuscript, and is especially trustworthy in the case of these letters sent to Babylon (see also Jeremiah 51), because the originals of them would be available for collation with the text preserved by Jeremiah himself. The verses were probably intended to allay excitement in Babylon consequent upon the knowledge that the representatives of various kings were assembled at that very time at Jerusalem to form a coalition against Babylon (^{<2978>}Jeremiah 27:3).

^{<2917>}**Jeremiah 29:17.** *Vile* The word does not occur elsewhere, but comes from a root signifying to shudder, and thus has an intense meaning.

^{<2922>}**Jeremiah 29:22.** *A curse* There is a play here of words. which probably was the cause why the death of these men passed into a proverb. One of them was named ben-Kolaiah; and they are to be made a curse (*kelalah*) ^{<17045>}, because Nebuchadnezzar had roasted (*kalah*) ^{<17033>} them. Compare the marginal reference note.

^{<2923>}**Jeremiah 29:23.** *Villany* Elsewhere folly, in the sense of lewdness (^{<0716>}Judges 20:6), unchastity.

^{<2924>}**Jeremiah 29:24-29.** A narrative showing the effects of Jeremiah’s letter. Shemaiah the leader of the false prophets wrote to Zephaniah, urging him to restrain the prophet’s zeal with the prison and the stocks.

~~29:24~~ **Jeremiah 29:24.** *To Shemaiah* Rather, concerning.

The Nehelamite Not as in the margin; but one belonging to the village of Nehlam (unknown).

~~29:26~~ **Jeremiah 29:26.** *Officers* Deputy high priests who had the oversight of the temple.

Mad See ~~29:26~~ 2 Kings 9:11 note. Many of the symbolic actions of the prophets, such as that of Jeremiah going about with a yoke on his neck, would be mocked at by the irreverent as passing the line between prophecy and madness.

Prisons Rather, the stocks (~~29:26~~Jeremiah 20:2).

The stocks Rather, collar.

~~29:28~~ **Jeremiah 29:28.** *This captivity is long* Rather, It is long. God's anger, their punishment, the exile, the time necessary for their repentance — all is long to men who will never live to see their country again.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 30

In Jeremiah 30—39, not all written at the same time, are gathered together whatsoever God had revealed to Jeremiah of happier import for the Jewish people. This subject is “the New covenant.” In contrast then with the rolls of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, we here have one containing the nation’s hope. A considerable portion was written in the 10th year of Zedekiah, when famine and pestilence were busy in the city, its capture daily more imminent, and the prophet himself in prison. Yet in this sad pressure of earthly troubles Jeremiah could bid his countrymen look courageously onward to the fulfillment of those hopes, which had so constantly in his darkest hours comforted the heart and nerved the arm of the Jew. The scroll consists of three portions:

- (1) “a triumphal hymn of Israel’s salvation,” Jeremiah 30—31;
- (2) Jeremiah 32; and
- (3) Jeremiah 33.

Jeremiah 30:2. *Write ... in a book* To be read and meditated upon by them in private. This makes it exceedingly probable that the date of these two chapters was also the 10th year of Zedekiah, immediately after the purchase of the field from Hanameel.

All the words i.e., the scroll was to be a summary of whatever of hope and mercy had been contained in previous predictions.

Jeremiah 30:5. Better, as in the margin. The prophet places his hearers in the center of Babylon, and describes it as convulsed with terror as the armies of Cyrus draw near. The voice of trembling is the war-cry of the advancing host: while fear and no peace implies that even among the exiles there is only alarm at the prospect of the city, where they had so long dwelt, being destroyed.

Jeremiah 30:7. *That day* i.e., the day of the capture of Babylon.

It is even the time of Jacob’s trouble Rather, and it is a time of trouble to Jacob, i.e., of anxiety to the Jews, for the usages of war were so brutal that they would be in danger when the enemy made their assault.

²⁸¹⁸**Jeremiah 30:8.** *Bonds* See ²⁸⁷⁸Jeremiah 27:2 note.

Shall no more serve themselves i.e., shall no more exact forced labor of him (²⁸²³Jeremiah 22:13).

²⁸¹⁹**Jeremiah 30:9.** *David their king* See ²⁸⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:5,6; i.e., Messiah.

²⁸¹⁰**Jeremiah 30:10,11.** These two verses are considered by some very similar in style to the last 27 chapters of Isaiah. The contrast, however, between the full end made with the pagan, and the certainty that Israel shall never so perish, is one of Jeremiah's most common topics.

²⁸¹¹**Jeremiah 30:11.** *In measure* See the ²⁸⁰⁴Jeremiah 10:24 note.

²⁸¹²**Jeremiah 30:12.** *Incurable* Mortal, fatal.

²⁸¹³**Jeremiah 30:13.** *That thou mayest be bound up* Others put a stop after "cause," and translate, For binding thy wound, healing plaster thou hast none.

²⁸¹⁴**Jeremiah 30:14.** *For the multitude ...* Or,

*Because of the multitude of thine iniquity,
Because thy sins are strong.*

Judah's lovers are the nations which once sought her alliance (see ²⁸²¹Jeremiah 22:20; 27:3).

²⁸¹⁵**Jeremiah 30:15.** Translate it:

Why criest thou because of thy breaking? Because thy pain is grievous? Because of the multitude of thine iniquity, Because thy sins are strong, I have done these things unto thee.

²⁸¹⁶**Jeremiah 30:16.** *Therefore* i.e., Because thou hast undergone thy punishment and cried out in consciousness of thy guilt.

²⁸¹⁷**Jeremiah 30:17.** *Restore health* Or, "apply a bandage" (²⁸⁰²Jeremiah 8:22 note). For they called read "they call."

²⁸¹⁸**Jeremiah 30:18-22.** The prophet speaks of Judah as the type of the Church, with Immanuel as her king.

Jeremiah 30:18. *tents* The word suggests that a considerable portion of the people were still nomads.

The city ... the palace Or, each city ... each palace. The heap means an artificial mound to keep the city out of the reach of inundations, and to increase the strength of the fortifications.

Shall remain after the manner thereof Rather, shall be inhabited according to its rights, i.e., suitably.

Jeremiah 30:19. *Them* i.e., the city and palace. Render the last words, become few become mean, i.e., despised, lightly esteemed.

Jeremiah 30:21. Translate, And his glorious one shall spring from himself, and his ruler shall go forth from his midst ... who is this that hath pledged his heart, i.e., hath staked his life, to deal near unto Me? i.e., “Messiah shall be revealed to them out of their own midst.” He can draw near unto God without fear of death, because being in the form of God, and Himself God, He can claim equality with God (^{Philippians 2:6}).

Jeremiah 30:22. This is the effect of Messiah’s ministry. Men cannot become God’s people, until there has been revealed one of themselves, a man, who can approach unto God, as being also God, and so can bridge over the gulf which separates the finite from the Infinite.

Jeremiah 30:23,24. Compare the marginal reference. These verses would more appropriately be attached to the next chapter, for which they form a suitable introduction.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 31

²⁸⁰⁰**Jeremiah 31:1.** *At the same time* literally, At that time, i.e., “the latter day.” mentioned in ²⁸⁰⁴Jeremiah 30:24.

²⁸⁰⁰**Jeremiah 31:2.** *The people which were left of the sword* A promise of the restoration of the ten tribes to their land.

The wilderness Either the desert which lay between Assyria and Palestine; or more probably an allusion to the wilderness of Mount Sinai.

Found grace ... rest Rather, “shall certainly find grace; I will go to give Israel rest.

²⁸⁰⁸**Jeremiah 31:3.** *Of old* From afar (margin). See ²⁸⁰⁰Jeremiah 30:10. To the Jew God was enthroned in Zion, and thus when His mercy was shown unto the exiles in Assyria it came from a distant region (⁴⁴⁶¹2 Chronicles 6:20,38).

With lovingkindness ... Rather, I have continued lovingkindness unto thee.

²⁸⁰⁶**Jeremiah 31:4.** *O virgin of Israel* i.e., the whole people (compare ²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 14:17 note).

²⁸⁰⁵**Jeremiah 31:5.** *Shall eat them as common things* Rather, shall eat the fruit. Literally, as in the margin. For three years the fruit of a newly-planted tree was not to be touched, that of the fourth year was consecrated to God, but on the fifth year it was profane, i.e., unconsecrated, and so might be applied to the owner’s use (¹⁸²³Leviticus 19:23-25).

²⁸⁰⁵**Jeremiah 31:6.** This verse anticipates a time when the schism caused by Jeroboam is over. Ephraimite watchmen equally with the tribe of Judah watch for the new moon that they may go up to Jerusalem to keep the appointed Feasts.

²⁸⁰⁷**Jeremiah 31:7.** *Among* Or, because of. Israel is the chief or, first of the nations (¹⁵⁵⁹Deuteronomy 26:19), and Yahweh summons mankind to rejoice, because the remnant of Israel is about to be restored to its old position.

²⁸⁰⁸**Jeremiah 31:8.** *The coasts of the earth* See ²⁴⁶²Jeremiah 6:22 note.

Thither Really, here. Not to the north country, but to Palestine, where Jeremiah wrote. A company is the word constantly used of Israel at the Exodus (^{<1216>}Exodus 16:3) as an organized community.

^{<2810>}**Jeremiah 31:9.** *Weeping* For joy, not for sorrow.

Supplications The conviction that God is guiding them, encourages them to pray.

Ephraim is My firstborn The house of Joseph is thus to be restored to its old preeminence.

^{<2810>}**Jeremiah 31:10.** *The isles* The coast land of the Mediterranean, used here to show that the most distant countries are to hear and marvel at Israel's wonderful restoration.

^{<2812>}**Jeremiah 31:12.** Omit together. The ten tribes are to flow like a river down from Zion's height to their own land, there to reap the rich produce of their tillage. In Jerusalem they would be occupied with religious duties, but after these are rendered to God, they are to disperse each to his own fields.

Sorrow Rather, languish, pine.

^{<2813>}**Jeremiah 31:13.** Both gives the idea of the men dancing, which is incorrect. Except at a religious solemnity (^{<1034>}2 Samuel 6:14), dancing was confined to women. Render and young men and old rejoice together.

^{<2815>}**Jeremiah 31:15-22.** The religious character of the restoration of the ten tribes. Chastisement brought repentance, and with it forgiveness; therefore God decrees their restoration.

^{<2815>}**Jeremiah 31:15.** Ramah, mentioned because of its nearness to Jerusalem, from which it was distant about five miles. As the mother of three tribes, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, Rachel is regarded as the mother of the whole ten. This passage is quoted by Matthew (marginal reference) as a type. In Jeremiah it is a poetical figure representing in a dramatic form the miserable condition of the kingdom of Ephraim devastated by the sword of the Assyrians.

^{<2816>}**Jeremiah 31:16.** Rachel's work had been that of bearing and bringing up children, and by their death she was deprived of the joy for

which she had labored: but by their being restored to her she will receive her wages.

^{<3617>}**Jeremiah 31:17.** *In thine end* i.e., for thy time to come (see the ^{<3911>}Jeremiah 29:11 note).

^{<2818>}**Jeremiah 31:18.** *As a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke* literally, like an untaught calf. Compare the ^{<3011>}Hosea 10:11 note. Ephraim, like an untrained steer, had resisted Yahweh's will.

^{<3819>}**Jeremiah 31:19.** *After that I was turned* i.e., after I had turned away from Thee. In ^{<3818>}Jeremiah 31:18 it has the sense of turning to God.

Instructed Brought to my senses by suffering. The smiting upon the thigh is a sign of sorrow. Compare ^{<3217>}Ezekiel 21:17.

The reproach of my youth i.e., the shame brought upon me by sins of my youth.

^{<3811>}**Jeremiah 31:20.** Moved to compassion by Ephraim's lamentation, Yahweh shows Himself as tender and ready to forgive as parents are their spoiled (rather, darling) child.

For ... him Or, "that so often as I speak concerning him," i.e., his punishment.

My bowels are troubled The metaphor expresses the most tender internal emotion.

^{<3812>}**Jeremiah 31:21.** *Waymarks* See ^{<2217>}2 Kings 23:17 note.

High heaps Or, signposts, pillars to point out the way.

Set thine heart Not set thy affection, but turn thy thoughts and attention (in Hebrew the heart is the seat of the intellect) to the highway, even the way by which thou wentest.

^{<3812>}**Jeremiah 31:22.** Israel instead of setting itself to return hesitates, and goes here and there in a restless mood. To encourage it God gives the sign following.

A woman shall compass a man i.e., the female shall protect the strong man; the weaker nature that needs help will surround the stronger with loving and fostering care. This expresses a new relation of Israel to the

Lord, a new covenant, which the Lord will make with His people (^{<2413>}Jeremiah 31:31 following). The fathers saw in these words a prophecy of the miraculous conception of our Lord by the Virgin.

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 31:23.** *As yet* Or, Again, once more. The prophet now turns to Judah. By the mountain of holiness is meant not the temple only, but all Jerusalem, of which the temple was the most sacred spot, and that by which all the rest was made holy.

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 31:24.** *Go forth* “Go about.” Judah shall have its settled population and fixed abodes; and shepherds shall move about with their flocks, wherever pasture is to be found.

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 31:25.** *Sorrowful* Or, languishing (^{<2412>}Jeremiah 31:12).

^{<2412>}**Jeremiah 31:26.** The prophet, seeming to himself to awake and look up in the midst of his sleep (whether ecstatic or not we cannot tell), rejoiced in a revelation so entirely consolatory, and unlike his usual message of woe.

^{<2417>}**Jeremiah 31:27-34.** The prophet shows that the happiness of Israel and Judah, united in one prosperous nation, will rest upon the consciousness that their chastisement has been the result of sins which they have themselves committed, and that God’s covenant depends not upon external sanctions, but upon a renewed heart.

^{<2417>}**Jeremiah 31:27.** So rapid shall be the increase that it shall seem as if children and young cattle sprang up out of the ground.

^{<2417>}**Jeremiah 31:29,30.** *A sour grape* Better, sour grapes. The idea that Jeremiah and Ezekiel (marginal reference) modified the terms of the second Commandment arises from a mistaken exegesis of their words. Compare ^{<2418>}Jeremiah 32:18; ^{<2416>}Deuteronomy 24:16. The obdurate Jews made it a reproach to the divine justice that the nation was to be sorely visited for Manasseh’s sin. But this was only because generation after generation had, instead of repenting, repeated the sins of that evil time, and even in a worse form. Justice must at length have its course. The acknowledgment that each man died for his own iniquity was a sign of their return to a more just and right state of feeling.

Jeremiah 31:31. A time is foretold which shall be to the nation as marked an epoch as was the Exodus. God at Sinai made a covenant with His people, of which the sanctions were material, or (where spiritual) materially understood. Necessarily therefore the Mosaic Church was temporary, but the sanctions of Jeremiah's Church are spiritual — written in the heart — and therefore it must take the place of the former covenant (^{<3813>}Hebrews 8:13), and must last forever. The prophecy was fulfilled when those Jews who accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, expanded the Jewish into the Christian Church.

Jeremiah 31:32. *Although ...* i.e., although as their husband (or, "lord" (Baal, compare ^{<3816>}Hosea 2:16)) I had lawful authority over them. The translation in ^{<3819>}Hebrews 8:9 agrees with the Septuagint here, but the balance of authority is in favor of the King James Version.

Jeremiah 31:33. The old law could be broken (^{<2812>}Jeremiah 31:32); to remedy this God gives, not a new law, but a new power to the old law. It used to be a mere code of morals, external to man, and obeyed as a duty. In Christianity, it becomes an inner force, shaping man's character from within.

Jeremiah 31:34. *I will forgive their iniquity* The foundation of the new covenant is the free forgiveness of sins (compare ^{<4012>}Matthew 1:21). It is the sense of this full unmerited love which so affects the heart as to make obedience henceforward an inner necessity.

Jeremiah 31:35. *Divideth ...* Rather, stirreth up the sea so that its waves roar.

Jeremiah 31:36. *If those* If these. From the uniformity of God's operations in the material world, the prophet deduces the certainty of a similar uniformity in God's dealings with man in things spiritual.

A nation A people. Israel has long ceased to be a nation, but it still exists as a numerous, influential, and distinct people. In ^{<4119>}Matthew 28:19,20 Jeremiah's prophecy receives its Christian application, and Israel becomes the Church, with the promise of perpetual existence. It has no national existence, but its members ought to be a strongly marked people, refusing to be merged in the world, while everywhere they pervade and influence it.

^{<3813>}**Jeremiah 31:37.** *All the seed* Unworthy members of Israel may be cast away, but the race shall never entirely cease to exist.

^{<3813>}**Jeremiah 31:38.** *To the LORD* Or, for Yahweh: for His dwelling in the hearts of a people prepared to be His temple.

^{<3813>}**Jeremiah 31:39.** *Over ... Gareb* Or, straight along the hill Gareb. Probably the hill of lepers, outside the old walls, toward the southwest.

Goath Goah. Unknown.

^{<3814>}**Jeremiah 31:40.** *The whole valley of the dead bodies* Probably some part of the Valley of Ben-Hinnom. Comparing ^{<3814>}Zechariah 2:4, the conclusion seems evident that Jeremiah's words are to be spiritually understood. His city is one that renders holy unto Yahweh what was before unclean. Compare John's new Jerusalem (^{<6227>}Revelation 21:27).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 32

The Chaldeans were already besieging the city, the prophet was in prison for foretelling its certain capture, and yet he bought with all the proper legal solemnities an estate, of which (¹⁸²⁵Leviticus 25:25) he had the right of redemption. The price apparently was small, but was more than the land commercially was worth. Jeremiah was now verging on 60, and only 10 of the 70 years of the captivity had passed by. But though the estate was not worth the purchase, the opportunity was precious as a means of assuring the people that (God would certainly bring them back. Jeremiah records, (²⁴²⁶Jeremiah 32:16-25) how his heart misgave him, upon which (²⁴²⁵Jeremiah 32:26-44) God unfolds to hint the full meaning of the sign, and assures him of the certainty of Israel's restoration.

²⁴⁰¹**Jeremiah 32:1.** The siege of Jerusalem began in Zedekiah's ninth year (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 39:1), but was temporarily raised upon the approach of an Egyptian army. See Jeremiah 37; 38.

²⁴⁰²**Jeremiah 32:2.** *The prison* Or, the guard, a part of the king's palace, probably where the royal guard had its quarters.

²⁴⁰³**Jeremiah 32:3.** For the prophecies on which the charge was grounded see ²⁴⁰⁴Jeremiah 21:4-7,9.

²⁴⁰⁵**Jeremiah 32:5.** *I visit* In the sense of punishment. See ²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 39:6,7; 52:11.

²⁴⁰⁷**Jeremiah 32:7.** Hanameel was strictly the first-cousin of Jeremiah. In Hebrew all the terms of relationship are used in a more loose way than with us.

²⁴⁰⁸**Jeremiah 32:8.** *The right of inheritance is thine* Hanameel therefore had no children, and at his death the land would have been Jeremiah's by right of birth. According to the Law (⁴⁸⁵⁷Numbers 35:5), it must have been part of the suburbs of Anathoth, within less than a mile, which was all the priests and Levites might cultivate.

²⁴⁰⁹**Jeremiah 32:9.** *Seventeen shekels of silver* literally, as in the margin, probably a legal formula. Jeremiah bought Hanameel's life-interest up to

the year of Jubilee, and no man's life was worth much in a siege like that of Jerusalem. As Jeremiah had no children, at his death the land would devolve to the person who would have inherited it had Jeremiah not bought it. He therefore bought what never was and never could have been of the slightest use to him, and gave for it what in the growing urgency of the siege might have been very serviceable to himself. Still, as the next heir, it was Jeremiah's duty to buy the estate, independently of the importance of the act as a sign to the people; and evidently he gave the full value.

^{<4820>}**Jeremiah 32:10, 11.** Translate: And I wrote the particulars of the purchase in the deed ... And I took the purchase-deed, both that which was sealed containing the oiler and the conditions, and that which was open etc. There were two indentures, of which one was called the purchase-deed, and was signed by the purchaser and the witnesses. It was then sealed, not in our sense of appending a seal in place of signatures, but to close it up. The open deed was probably an exact copy, and was that intended for common use. In case its authenticity was called in question, the sealed copy would have to be produced before the judge, the seal opened, and if its contents agreed with those of the open deed, the decision would be in the buyer's favor.

By the offer is probably meant the specification. The conditions, literally, the statutes, would be the stipulations and terms of the sale, e.g. as to its restoration at the year of jubile, its price etc. The placing of the deeds in jar was of course intended to preserve them from damp during the long years of the exile.

^{<4825>}**Jeremiah 32:15.** *Possessed* bought.

^{<4827>}**Jeremiah 32:17.** (27). *Too hard* literally, too wonderful.

^{<4828>}**Jeremiah 32:18.** *Recompensest* The recompence is placed in the bosom, because, in the East, the garments are so arranged as to form a pocket there. Thus then, men must receive and carry with them God's requital for their deeds.

^{<4829>}**Jeremiah 32:20.** The sense is, who hast set, i.e., performed (^{<0102>}Exodus 10:2) signs etc., and hast continued working them unto this day, both in Israel and among men (i.e., the pagan).

^{<4823>}**Jeremiah 32:23.** *Possessed* See ^{<4880>}Jeremiah 8:10 note.

^{<4824>}**Jeremiah 32:24.** *The mounds* See ^{<4816>}Jeremiah 6:6 note.

^{<4825>}**Jeremiah 32:25.** *For* See the margin. It is enough to place the command side by side with the state of Jerusalem to show how contrary it is to all the rules of human prudence. The prophet is sure that God will explain to him his difficulty.

^{<4826>}**Jeremiah 32:26-44.** The answer is divided into two parts;

- (a) ^{<4826>}Jeremiah 32:26-35, the sins of Judah are shown to be the cause of her punishment:
- (b) ^{<4826>}Jeremiah 32:36-44, this punishment was not for Judah's destruction, but for her amendment.

^{<4828>}**Jeremiah 32:28.** *I will give* Or, I am giving.

^{<4829>}**Jeremiah 32:30.** *From their youth* God's mighty deeds for Israel began in Egypt (^{<4821>}Jeremiah 32:20), and so did Israel's sin.

^{<4830>}**Jeremiah 32:34,35.** These verses are repeated from ^{<4823>}Jeremiah 7:30,31, but with two important variations. Baal is put for Tophet, and to Molech instead of in the fire. Molech the king and Baal the lord are different names of the sun-god, but in altered relations. Molech is the sun as the mighty fire, which in passing through the signs of the Zodiac burns up its own children. It is an old Canaanite worship, carried by the Phoenicians to all their colonies, and firmly established in Palestine at the time when the Israelites conquered the country.

^{<4831>}**Jeremiah 32:39.** *One heart, and one way* Compare ^{<4813>}Jeremiah 3:13. Under the new covenant they will with one consent walk in the one narrow path of right-doing (^{<4874>}Matthew 7:14). Forever, i.e., every day, constantly.

^{<4834>}**Jeremiah 32:40.** God's new covenant (^{<4813>}Jeremiah 31:31) is on God's side, I will not turn away from them to do them good, i.e., I will never cease from doing them good. On their side, I will put My fear in their hearts that they depart not from Me. In these two conditions consists the certainty of the eternal duration of the covenant (^{<4830>}Matthew 28:20).

^{<4834>}**Jeremiah 32:41.** *Assuredly* literally, in truth, i.e., in verity, in reality. It refers to God's firm purpose, rather than to the safety and security of the

people. The new covenant is one of grace, indicated by God's rejoicing over His people, and "planting them with His whole heart."

~~2636~~ **Jeremiah 32:43.** *Fields* literally, The field, the open unenclosed country (~~2447~~Jeremiah 4:17). In ~~2634~~Jeremiah 32:44 fields refers to the several portions of it which belonged to individuals, and of which the boundaries were shown by landmarks.

~~2634~~ **Jeremiah 32:44.** *Subscribe evidences* See ~~2620~~Jeremiah 32:10. In order to bring the certainty of the return from exile more vividly before the mind, the prophet enumerates the several subdivisions of the territory of the kings of Judah.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 33

The promises of Jeremiah 32 are confirmed, but with a more directly spiritual meaning. The prophet foreshows in it the happiness of the returning exiles, of which the culminating glory is Messiah's birth (²⁴³¹⁵Jeremiah 33:15,16), in whom both the Levitical priesthood and the Davidic kingdom are combined (²⁴³¹⁷Jeremiah 33:17,18), and God's covenant with mankind made perpetual (²⁴³¹⁹Jeremiah 33:19-26).

²⁴³⁰¹**Jeremiah 33:1.** *The prison* The guard.

²⁴³⁰²**Jeremiah 33:2.** Or, Thus saith Yahweh the doer of it, Yahweh who formeth it, that He may establish it, Yahweh is His name. The word "it" means whatsoever Yahweh wills.

²⁴³⁰³**Jeremiah 33:3.** *Mighty things* Or, as in the margin. The words are probably a quotation from ²³⁸¹⁶Isaiah 48:6.

²⁴³⁰⁴**Jeremiah 33:4.** *By ... by* Rather, against ... against. As the works of the enemy approached the walls, houses were pulled down to build inner fortifications. Swords are mentioned in ²³³⁰⁹Ezekiel 26:9 (translated, axes), as used for breaking down the towers in the walls. See ²⁴⁵¹⁷Jeremiah 5:17, note.

²⁴³⁰⁵**Jeremiah 33:5.** Render, They, i.e., the Jews come to fight with the Chaldaeans, and to fill them, i.e., the houses, with the dead bodies etc.

²⁴³⁰⁶**Jeremiah 33:6.** I will bring it health and cure) I will lay upon it a bandage and healing, i.e., a healing bandage, a plaster with healing medicines.

²⁴³⁰⁷**Jeremiah 33:7.** *At the first* i.e., before their sins had provoked God to anger.

²⁴³⁰⁸**Jeremiah 33:9.** *It* The city, Jerusalem.

They shall fear and tremble With terror, because of the eternal opposition between right and wrong, truth and error. The nations of the earth as opposed to Israel represent the world as opposed to the Church.

²⁴⁸¹⁰**Jeremiah 33:10.** *Which ye say shall be desolate* Of which ye say, It is desolate ... The prophet first sees Judaea silent and desolate during the 70 years' captivity: and then describes the two things, men and cattle, without which land is valueless.

²⁴⁸¹¹**Jeremiah 33:11.** *Praise the LORD ...* The customary formula of thanksgiving in many of the later Psalms, and from its occurrence in ⁴⁴⁸³2 Chronicles 5:13; 7:3,6ff probably a regular part of the liturgical service of the temple.

Shall say ... shall bring the sacrifice of praise Or, say ... as they bring praise, i.e., a thank-offering (see the marginal reference) into the house of the LORD

At the first Before the captivity, and when still unpolluted by the sins which have brought upon it so heavy a chastisement.

²⁴⁸¹²**Jeremiah 33:12.** *An habitation* "A shepherd's encampment." The words, "causing their flocks to lie down," mean gathering them into the fold at night.

²⁴⁸¹³**Jeremiah 33:13.** *Telleth* i.e., counts the number of his sheep.

²⁴⁸¹⁴**Jeremiah 33:14.** *That good thing* Better, the good word (²⁴⁹¹⁰Jeremiah 29:10), with reference to the promise already given (²⁴²¹⁵Jeremiah 23:5,6).

²⁴⁸¹⁵**Jeremiah 33:15,16.** Compare the marginal reference. When the good word was spoken, the name Yahweh our Righteousness was given to the righteous Sprout: here it is given to Jerusalem, i.e., to the Church, because it is her business mediately to work on earth that righteousness which Christ works absolutely. Compare ⁴⁰¹²³Ephesians 1:23.

²⁴⁸¹⁷**Jeremiah 33:17,18.** Read literally, these verses promise the permanent restoration of the Davidic throne and (of the Levitical priesthood. As a matter of fact Zedekiah was the last king of David's line, and the Levitical priest-hood has long passed away. Both these changes Jeremiah himself foretold (²⁴²¹¹Jeremiah 22:30; 3:16). In what way then is this apparent contradiction (compare ²⁴⁶¹¹Isaiah 66:20-23; Ezekiel 40—48) to be explained? The solution is probably as follows. It was necessary that the Bible should be intelligible to the people at the time when it was

written, and in some degree to the writer. The Davidic kingship and the Levitical priest-hood were symbols, which represented to the Jew all that was most dear to his heart in the state of things under which he lived. Their restoration was the restoration of his national and spiritual life. Neither was so restored as to exist permanently. But that was given instead, of which both were types, the Church, whose Head is the true prophet, priest and King.

~~33:21~~ **Jeremiah 33:21,22.** This promise also has been not literally, but spiritually fulfilled, for in this sense only have the seed of David and the Levites been multiplied.

~~33:24~~ **Jeremiah 33:24.** *Considerest thou not* literally, Hast thou not seen, i.e., noticed?

This people i.e., the Jews. *Thus ...* Or, and “My people they have despised,” so that they are “no more a nation” in their sight. They say that God has rejected Judah as well as Israel: and thus they despise themselves in their relation to God as His covenant-people, by regarding their national existence as about immediately to cease forever.

~~33:25~~ **Jeremiah 33:25.** *The ordinances of heaven and earth* i.e., the whole order of nature Nature is not more firmly established than God’s purposes in grace.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 34

The ordinary view of this prophecy (Jeremiah 34), that it is a more full account of the narrative given in ^{<341>}Jeremiah 32:3-5, is not so probable as that which takes it in connection with Jeremiah 21. Jeremiah had then informed Zedekiah by his messengers that Jerusalem would certainly be captured: but he was still in a condition to obtain good terms, and the prophet goes to him and lays before him the alternative. Zedekiah with all the obstinacy of a weak man chose to continue the war, and lost kingdom, eyesight, and liberty.

^{<341>}**Jeremiah 34:1.** *People* Peoples, i.e., tribes, races, under the rule of one man.

^{<341>}**Jeremiah 34:5.** *In peace* See ^{<342>}Jeremiah 12:12 note.

Burn odors “Make a burning.” The burning was probably that of piles of wood, and spices were added only as an special honor. It was not a Jewish custom to burn the dead. As these burnings depended upon the estimation in which the dead king was held, the verse implies a prosperous reign, such as Zedekiah might have had as an obedient vassal to Babylon.

I have pronounced the word I have spoken the word.

^{<341>}**Jeremiah 34:7.** This marks the exact time, that it was early in the campaign, while the outlying fortresses still occupied the attention of Nebuchadnezzar’s army. Lachish and Azekah were strong cities in the plain toward Egypt and must be taken before the Chaldeans could march upon Jerusalem: otherwise the Egyptians might collect there and fall upon them.

^{<341>}**Jeremiah 34:8-22.** It is usual with commentators to say that, the laws dealing with the emancipation of the Hebrew slaves, as also that of the land resting during the sabbatical year, were not observed. The narrative teaches us the exact contrary. The manumission of the slaves on the present occasion was the spontaneous act of Zedekiah and the people. They knew of the law, and acknowledged its obligation. The observance of it was, no doubt, lax: the majority let their own selfish interests prevail; but the minority made might give way to right, and Zedekiah supported their efforts though only in a weak way.

Early in January, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, the Chaldaean army approached Jerusalem. The people made a covenant with the king, who appears as the abettor of the measure, to let their slaves go free. Possibly patriotism had its share in this: and as Jerusalem was strongly fortified, all classes possibly hoped that if the slaves were manumitted, they too would labor with a more hearty good-will in resisting the enemy. In the summer of the same year the Egyptians advanced to the rescue, and Nebuchadnezzar withdrew to meet their attack. The Jews with a strange levity, which sets them before us in a most despicable light, at once forced the manumitted slaves back into bondage. With noble indignation Jeremiah rebukes them for their treachery, assures them that the Chaldaean army will return, and warns them of the certainty of the punishment which they so richly merited.

Jeremiah 34:8. As the Chaldaean army swept over the country the wealthier classes would all flee to Jerusalem, taking with them their households. And as the Mosaic Law was probably more carefully kept there than in the country, the presence in these families of slaves who had grown grey in service may have given offence to the stricter classes at the capital.

To proclaim liberty unto them The words are those of the proclamation of the year of jubile to the people, whereupon it became their duty to set their slaves free.

Jeremiah 34:9. *Should serve himself of them* Should make them serve him (see **Jeremiah 25:14**).

Jeremiah 34:11. *They turned, and caused ... to return* But afterward they again made the slaves return.

Jeremiah 34:13. *The house of bondmen* The miserable prison in which, after being worked in the fields all day in gangs, the slaves were shut up at night.

Jeremiah 34:16. *At their pleasure* literally, for themselves.

Jeremiah 34:17. *I will make you to be removed into* "I will cause you to be a terror unto." Men would shudder at them.

~~2618~~ **Jeremiah 34:18.** *The words ...* The Jews spoke of “cutting” a covenant, because the contracting parties cut a calf in twain and passed between the pieces. Thus cutting a covenant and cutting a calf in twain, meant the same thing.

~~2621~~ **Jeremiah 34:21.** *Which are gone up from you* i.e., which have departed for the present, and have raised the siege.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 35

Jeremiah 35:2. *The house* The family.

The Rechabites The Rechabites were a nomadic tribe not of Jewish but of Kenite race, and connected with the Amalekites (^{<0021>}Numbers 24:21; ^{<0156>}1 Samuel 15:6), from whom however they had separated themselves, and made a close alliance with the tribe of Judah (^{<0016>}Judges 1:16), on whose southern borders they took up their dwelling (^{<0270>}1 Samuel 27:10). While, however, the main body of the Kenites gradually adopted settled habits, and dwelt in cities (^{<0819>}1 Samuel 30:29), the Rechabites persisted in leading the free desert life, and in this determination they were finally confirmed by the influence and authority of Jonadab, who lived in Jehu's reign. He was a zealous adherent of Yahweh (^{<1205>}2 Kings 10:15-17), and possibly a religious reformer; and as the names of the men mentioned in the present narrative are all compounded with Yah, it is plain that the tribe continued their allegiance to Him.

The object of Jonadab in endeavoring to preserve the nomad habits of his race was probably twofold. He wished first to maintain among them the purer morality and higher feeling of the desert contrasted with the laxity and effeminacy of the city life; and secondly he was anxious for the preservation of their freedom. Their punctilious obedience (^{<2854>}Jeremiah 35:14) to Jonadab's precepts is employed by Jeremiah to point a useful lesson for his own people.

The date of the prophecy is the interval between the battle of Carchemish and the appearance of Nebuchadnezzar at Jerusalem, (^{<2451>}Jeremiah 35:11) at the end of the same year. It is consequently 17 years earlier than the narrative in ^{<2408>}Jeremiah 34:8ff

Jeremiah 35:3. Jaazaniah was the chief of that portion of the tribe which had taken refuge in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 35:4. The title man of God, i.e., prophet, belongs to Hanan, identified by many with Hanani (^{<1467>}2 Chronicles 16:7). The sons of Hanan were probably his disciples. If so, we find a religious school or sect, regularly established in the precincts of the temple, of whose views and

modes of interpretation we know nothing. Plainly however, the Hananites were friendly to Jeremiah, and lent him their hall for his purpose.

The chamber of the princes Probably the council-chamber in which the great officers of state met for the despatch of business.

The keeper of the door There were three of these keepers, answering to the outer and inner courts of the temple, and the entrance to the temple itself. They were officers of high rank, having precedence next to the high priest and his deputy.

²⁴⁸¹⁵ **Jeremiah 35:5.** *Pots* “Bowls,” to fill the cups.

²⁴⁸¹⁶ **Jeremiah 35:6,7.** Wine is the symbol of a settled life, because the vine requires time for its growth and care in its cultivation, while the preparation of the wine itself requires buildings, and it then has to be stored up before it is ready for use. The drink of nomads consists of the milk of their herds.

²⁴⁸¹⁷ **Jeremiah 35:7.** *Strangers* Because not of Jewish blood, though wandering in their territory.

²⁴⁸¹⁸ **Jeremiah 35:8,10.** *Our father* Not merely our ancestor, but the founder of our institutions.

²⁴⁸¹⁹ **Jeremiah 35:11.** *The Syrians* The Septuagint substitutes Assyrians for Syrians, but marauding bands of the Aramaeans are probably meant.

²⁴⁸¹⁹ **Jeremiah 35:13.** Jeremiah, accompanied by the main body of the Rechabites, went into one of the courts of the temple, and there addressed to the people the rebuke following.

²⁴⁸¹⁴ **Jeremiah 35:14.** *Are performed* Are established, i.e., are maintained in full force.

Unto this day i.e., for more than 200 years.

²⁴⁸¹⁵ **Jeremiah 35:15.** *All ... the prophets* The Rechabites had had but one lawgiver: the Jews had had a succession of messengers from God.

²⁴⁸¹⁹ **Jeremiah 35:19.** Travelers bear witness to the existence of a large tribe who represent themselves as the descendants of the Rechabites. The prediction was also literally fulfilled in the Rechabites being in some way

incorporated into the tribe of Levi, whose office especially it was to “stand before” Yahweh (~~6:10~~ Deuteronomy 10:8).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 36

Historical events connected with the collection of Jeremiah's prophecies into a volume, and with his personal history immediately before and after the siege of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 36-44).

Jeremiah 36. Attached to the prophecies relating to Israel and Judah is an account of the circumstances under which very many of them, and also the prophecies concerning the Gentiles, were first formed into one volume. See the introduction of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 36:1. *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim* See **Jeremiah 25:1** note. The present chapter belongs to the very end of that year. The capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar took place early in Jehoiakim's fourth year, long before the writing of Jehoiakim's scroll. The humiliation seems to have sunk deeply into the heart of Jehoiakim, and when Jeremiah prophesied extended dominion to the Chaldaeans (**Jeremiah 36:29**), his anger knew no bounds. It was the fact that judgment had begun which made it expedient to gather Jeremiah's predictions into one volume, with the object:

- (1) of inducing the people to repent, and
- (2) of persuading the king to be a true subject of the Chaldaean empire.

Jeremiah 36:2. *A roll of a book* A parchment-scroll, consisting of several skins sewn together, and cut of an even breadth, with a piece of wood at one end (or, in case of larger volumes, at both ends) on which to roll them up.

Write therein all the words ... The phrase means that the roll was to contain "all the counsel of God" (**Acts 20:27**) upon the special point mentioned in **Jeremiah 36:3**; and that the prophet was not to keep anything back.

Jeremiah 36:3. Compare **Jeremiah 26:3**. In point of date Jeremiah 26 is immediately prior to the present.

Jeremiah 36:5. *Shut up* Hindered from going; perhaps through fear of Jehoiakim.

Jeremiah 36:6. *The fasting day* A fasting day. Baruch was to wait for a proper opportunity (**Jeremiah 36:9**).

Jeremiah 36:7. *They will present their supplication* i.e., humbly. See the margin. The phrase also contained the idea of the prayer being accepted.

Jeremiah 36:8. *Reading* To read.

Jeremiah 36:9. The ninth month answers to our December, and the fast was probably in commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans in the previous year.

Jeremiah 36:10. Gemariah seems to have inherited his father's office of public scribe or secretary of state (see **2 Kings 22:3**). As brother of Ahikam, he would be favorable to Jeremiah.

The higher court The inner court; into which it was not lawful for the people to enter, but the chamber probably itself formed one of its sides, and could be approached from the outer court.

Jeremiah 36:11. Probably as his father had lent Jeremiah the hall, Michaiah had been commanded to bring Gemariah (**Jeremiah 36:12**) tidings, as soon as the reading was over, of the nature of the prophet's words, and the effect produced by them upon the people.

Jeremiah 36:12. *The scribe's chamber* The chancery in which the king's business was conducted. Probably Elishama was one of the "principal scribes of the host" (**Jeremiah 52:25**), i.e., the secretary of state for war. The business which had brought together "all the princes" would have reference to the Chaldean war.

Jeremiah 36:14. Jehudi signifies a Jew and Cushi an Ethiopian, but it seems reasonable to conclude that they are genuine, proper names.

Jeremiah 36:16. *They were afraid both one and other* literally, "they trembled each to his neighbor," i.e., they showed their alarm by their looks and gestures one to another. They felt that what he had so consistently prophesied for a period of 23 years would in all probability be fulfilled.

We will surely tell Rather, We must tell the king. It was their official duty.

²⁸⁶⁷**Jeremiah 36:17.** The scroll might have been drawn up by Baruch from memoranda of his own without the prophet's direct authority. The princes therefore did not ask from curiosity, but to obtain necessary information.

²⁸⁶⁸**Jeremiah 36:18.** *He pronounced* He used to say aloud, he dictated. Baruch's office was merely mechanical. He contributed nothing but hand, pen, and ink.

²⁸⁶⁹**Jeremiah 36:20.** *The court* i.e., The inner quadrangle of the palace, in which was the royal residence.

They laid up the roll They left the scroll in charge, i.e., in the care of someone.

²⁸⁷⁰**Jeremiah 36:22.** *The winterhouse* A separate portion of the palace was used for residence according to the season (marginal reference).

And there was a fire on the hearth ... And the fire-pan burning before them. On the middle of the floor was a brazier containing burning charcoal.

²⁸⁷¹**Jeremiah 36:23.** *Leaves* Columns: literally folding-doors; the word exactly describes the shape of the columns of writing upon the scroll.

Penknife "Scribe's knife;" used to shape the reed for writing, and to make erasures in the parchment.

On the hearth Or, in the fire-pan. The conduct of the king shows how violent was his temper.

²⁸⁷²**Jeremiah 36:25.** It is remarkable to find Elnathan interceding for Jeremiah after the office he had discharged toward Urijah (²⁸⁷³Jeremiah 26:22).

²⁸⁷⁴**Jeremiah 36:26.** *Hammelech* Either a proper name or a prince of the blood royal (see the margin; ²⁸⁷⁵Jeremiah 38:6; ²⁸⁷⁶1 Kings 22:26).

²⁸⁷⁷**Jeremiah 36:29.** *The king of Babylon ...* These words do not prove that Nebuchadnezzar had not already come, and compelled Jehoiakim to become his vassal. The force lies in the last words, which predict such a coming as would make the land utterly desolate: and this would be the result of the king throwing off the Chaldaean yoke.

Jeremiah 36:30. *He shall have none to sit ...* The 3 months' reign of Jehoiakim was too destitute of real power to be a contradiction to this prediction.

Jeremiah 36:32. *Many like words* The second scroll was thus a more complete record of the main lessons taught by Jeremiah during the long course of his inspired ministry.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 37

It is evident that Zedekiah was well affected toward Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 37—38, dealing with events during the siege of Jerusalem, we have an account of his relations with Jeremiah and of the prophet's personal history up to the capture of the city.

^{<2470>}**Jeremiah 37:3.** This embassy is not to be confounded with that (^{<2420>}Jeremiah 21:1) which took place when Nebuchadnezzar was just marching upon Jerusalem; this was in the brief interval of hope occasioned by the approach of an Egyptian army to raise the siege. The Jews were elated by this temporary relief, and miserably abused it (^{<2441>}Jeremiah 34:11). Zedekiah seems to some extent to have shared their hopes, and to have expected that the prophet would intercede for the city as successfully as Isaiah had done (^{<2376>}Isaiah 37:6). Jehucal was a member of the warlike party (^{<2480>}Jeremiah 38:1), as also was the deputy high priest Zephaniah, but otherwise he was well affected to Jeremiah.

^{<2457>}**Jeremiah 37:5.** *Then* And. Pharaoh-Hophra (^{<2443>}Jeremiah 44:30), the Apries of Herodotus, probably withdrew without giving Nebuchadnezzar battle. After a reign of 25 years, he was dethroned by Amasis, but allowed to inhabit his palace at Sais, where finally he was strangled.

^{<2470>}**Jeremiah 37:7-10.** Jeremiah's answer here is even more unfavorable than that which is given in ^{<2420>}Jeremiah 21:4-7. So hopeless is resistance that the disabled men among the Chaldeans would alone suffice to capture the city and burn it to the ground.

^{<2471>}**Jeremiah 37:11.** *Was broken up for fear of Or*, "had got them up from the face of." It was simply a strategic movement.

^{<2471>}**Jeremiah 37:12.** *To separate himself thence ...* To receive a share thence. When the siege was temporarily raised, the first object would be food, and, accordingly, Jeremiah accompanied by others, who, like himself, had a right to share in the produce of the priests' lands at Anathoth, started there to see whether any stores remained which might be available for their common use.

^{<35713>}**Jeremiah 37:13.** *A captain of the ward* Captain of the watch, whose business was to examine all who went in and out.

The gate of Benjamin The northern gate, also called the gate of Ephraim.

Thou fallest away ... His well-known views made Jeremiah a suspected person, though the charge was groundless.

^{<35714>}**Jeremiah 37:14.** *The princes* Not the noblemen trained in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah's friends (^{<34516>}Jeremiah 26:16), but those described in ^{<34418>}Jeremiah 24:8. They assumed that the accusation was true; they first scourged and then imprisoned Jeremiah.

^{<35715>}**Jeremiah 37:15.** *The house* Probably the official residence of the secretary of state.

^{<35716>}**Jeremiah 37:16.** *Dungeon* literally, house of a cistern or pit, and evidently underground. In this cistern-like excavation were several cells or arched vaults, in one of which with little light and less ventilation Jeremiah remained a long time.

^{<35721>}**Jeremiah 37:21.** *The prison* the watch (marginal reference).

Piece literally, a circle, i.e., a round cake.

The bakers' street It is usual in oriental towns for each trade to have a special place set apart for it. Compare ^{<44016>}Acts 10:6.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 38

The object of the princes in imprisoning Jeremiah in Jonathan's house had been to get him out of the way, as his predictions depressed the minds of the people. This purpose was frustrated by his removal to the guard-house, where he was with the soldiery, and his friends had free access to him (²⁴⁸¹²Jeremiah 32:12). Therefore, the princes determined upon the prophet's death. Zedekiah was powerless (²⁴⁸¹⁵Jeremiah 38:5), and Jeremiah was thrown into a miry pit.

²⁴⁸⁰¹**Jeremiah 38:1.** *Had spoken* Spake; or, was speaking.

²⁴⁸⁰⁴**Jeremiah 38:4.** *For thus ...* Because he makes the men of war dispirited. No doubt this was true. Jeremiah, however, did not speak as a private person, but as the representative of the government; the temporal ruler in a theocracy being responsible directly to God.

²⁴⁸⁰⁵**Jeremiah 38:5.** All real power was in their hands, and as they affirmed that Jeremiah's death was a matter of necessity, the king did not dare refuse it to them.

²⁴⁸⁰⁶**Jeremiah 38:6.** *The dungeon* The cistern. Every house in Jerusalem was supplied with a subterranean cistern, so well constructed that the city never suffered in a siege from want of water. So large were they that when dry they seem to have been used for prisons (²⁴⁸⁰¹Zechariah 9:11).

Hammelech See ²⁴⁸⁰⁹Jeremiah 36:26 note.

The prison The guard. They threw Jeremiah into the nearest cistern, intending that he should die of starvation. Some have thought that Psalm 69 was composed by Jeremiah when in this cistern.

²⁴⁸⁰⁷**Jeremiah 38:7.** *Ebed-melech* i.e., the king's slave. By "Ethiopian" or Cushite is meant the Cushite of Africa, or negro. It seems (compare ²²³¹¹2 Kings 23:11) as if such eunuchs (or, chamberlains) took their names from the king, while the royal family and the princes generally bore names compounded with the appellations of the Deity.

²⁴⁸¹⁰**Jeremiah 38:10.** *Thirty men* So large a number suggests that Zedekiah expected some resistance. (Some read "three" men.)

Jeremiah 38:11. *Old cast clouts ...* Rags of torn garments and rags of worn-out garments.

Jeremiah 38:14. *The third entry* There was probably a passage from the palace to the temple at this entry, and the meeting would take place in some private chamber close by.

Jeremiah 38:15. *Wilt thou not hearken ...!* Rather, Thou wilt not hearken.

Jeremiah 38:16. *That made us this soul* This very unusual addition to the formula of an oath (^{1011B}1 Samuel 20:3) was intended to strengthen it. By acknowledging that his soul was God's workmanship Zedekiah also implied his belief in God's power over it.

Jeremiah 38:19. *The Jews that are fallen to the Chaldaeans* These deserters probably formed a numerous party, and now would be the more indignant with Zedekiah for having rejected their original advice to submit.

Jeremiah 38:22. *All the women that are left* Belonging to the harems of former kings (compare ¹⁰²²1 Kings 2:22), attendants, and slaves.

Thy friends ... This satirical song (compare Obad. 1:7) should be translated as a distich:

*Thy friends have urged thee on and prevailed upon thee:
Thy feet are stuck in the mire; they have turned back.*

Thy friends literally "men of thy peace," thy acquaintance (²¹¹⁰Jeremiah 20:10). They urge Zedekiah on to a hopeless struggle with the Chaldaeans, and when he gets into difficulties leave him in the lurch.

Jeremiah 38:23. *So* And. In addition to the ridicule there shall be the miseries of the capture.

Thou shalt cause this city to be burned literally, as margin. It shall be thy own act as completely as if done with thine own hand.

Jeremiah 38:28. *And he was there when ...* These words are altered by some to "and it came to pass when" etc., and taken to form the opening of Jeremiah 39.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 39

”The Capture of Jerusalem” — The majority of the particulars given in ^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:1-14 occur again (marginal reference); and are by some regarded as an interpolation. The external evidence (that of the versions) is, however, in favor of their authenticity. ^{<281>}Jeremiah 39:14 is to be reconciled with ^{<240>}Jeremiah 40:1-4 by remembering that Gedaliah had left Jerusalem and gone to Mizpah (^{<240>}Jeremiah 40:6), a city in the immediate neighborhood; and as he was not at home to protect the prophet, nothing is more probable than that Jeremiah in company with the main body of captives was brought to Ramah in chains.

^{<280>}**Jeremiah 39:3.** These princes were four:

- (1) Nergal, Sharezer, i.e., Nergal-sar-usur (May Nergal protect the king);
- (2) Samgar-Nebo (Be gracious, O Nebo);
- (3) Sarsechim. No explanation is given at present of this name. He was Rab-saris, i.e., chief of the eunuchs (^{<287>}2 Kings 18:17 note).
- (4) Another Nergal-sharezer, who was Rab-mag, i.e., chief of the Magians. He is known in history as Neriglissar, the son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, and probably his vicegerent during his seven years of madness. Two years after his death Neriglissar murdered Evil-Merodach, Nebuchadnezzar’s son, and seized the crown, but after a reign of four years was slain in battle against Cyrus, when disputing with him the crown of Media. See ^{<288>}Daniel 5:1 note.

The middlegate Probably that which separated the city of Zion from the lower town.

^{<280>}**Jeremiah 39:4-10.** Compare the marginal reference. The differences between the two accounts are slight.

^{<283>}**Jeremiah 39:13.** Nebuzar-adan is in the inscriptions Nabu-zir-iddina (Nebo has given offspring); and Nebushasban, Nabu-sizibanni (Nebo save me), whom some identify with Sarsechim (^{<283>}Jeremiah 39:3).

^{<284>}**Jeremiah 39:14.** Jeremiah was to be taken out of the court of the watch, and placed in the palace close by.

He dwelt among the people i.e., he was no longer in custody, but master of his own actions.

²⁸⁹⁵**Jeremiah 39:15.** This prophecy probably came to Jeremiah after his interview with Zedekiah (²⁸⁹⁴Jeremiah 38:14), but is added here as a supplement in order not to break the sequence of events.

²⁸⁹⁷**Jeremiah 39:17.** *Of whom thou art afraid* The Chaldaeans. Ebed-melech apparently looked forward with much alarm to the bloodshed sure to take place at the storming of the city.

²⁸⁹⁸**Jeremiah 39:18.** *A prey unto thee* An unexpected and unlooked-for gain. He had given proof of faith in courageously delivering God's prophet.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 40

Jeremiah 40:1. As what follows is mainly a historical narrative, it seems that the title “The word ...” was appropriate not merely to a prediction of the future, but to an account of the past, if written by a prophet. The Jews regarded history as inspired if written by a seer, and thus their historical books are called “the early prophets.”

Ramah Probably all the prisoners of note were collected at Ramah indiscriminately, and examined there.

Bound in chains The prisoners were probably fastened together in couples by one hand, and a rope passed down the center to bind them in a long line, and prevent attempts at escape.

Jeremiah 40:5. *Now while he was not yet gone back* Most modern commentators render “And as he yet answered nothing, Return then, he said, to Gedaliah ...”

Victuals A ration of food.

A reward A present.

Jeremiah 40:7. The men would be the old and infirm: the women those whose husbands and protectors had perished in the wars (e.g. Jeremiah 41:10). The word children includes all the inferior members of a household.

Jeremiah 40:9,10. *To serve the Chaldeans* literally, as margin; to be their minister and lieutenant. Gedaliah supposed that officers of high rank would come from time to time from Babylon to look after the king’s interests. But whatever was ordered would be done through him, as being the prime minister.

Gather ye wine As Jerusalem was captured in the fifth month, August, it would now be autumn, and there would be fruit upon the trees, enough to maintain the scanty population during the winter.

Taken Or, seized. Every captain had probably occupied some place by force as his head quarters, and Gedaliah bids them retain them. He frankly

accepts the whole existing state of things, as a necessary step toward re-establishing confidence.

~~3404~~ **Jeremiah 40:14.** It is difficult to say what object Baalis can have had in murdering Gedaliah. As an ally of Zedekiah (~~3408~~ Jeremiah 27:3), he may have had a spite against the family of Ahikam for opposing, as most probably they did at Jeremiah's instigation, the league proposed (Jeremiah 27). Ishmael's motive was envy and spite at seeing a subject who had always opposed the war now invested with kingly power, in place of the royal family.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 41

²⁴⁰⁰**Jeremiah 41:1.** *The seventh month* Gedaliah's government lasted less than two months.

Even Rather, and. Ishmael was descended probably from Elishama the son of David (¹⁰⁸⁶2 Samuel 5:16). Ten grandees each with his retinue would have aroused suspicion, but the smallness of Ishmael's following put Gedaliah completely off his guard.

²⁴⁰⁵**Jeremiah 41:5.** These three towns all lay in the tribe of Ephraim, and in the district planted by Salmaneser with Cuthites; but through the fact of these men having cut themselves (see ²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 16:6 note), is suspicious, yet they were probably pious Israelites, going up to Jerusalem, carrying the meat offering usual at the feast of tabernacles, of which this was the season, and mourning over the destruction, not of the city, but of the temple, to the repairs of which we find the members of this tribe contributing in Josiah's time (¹⁴⁰⁰2 Chronicles 34:9).

²⁴⁰⁶**Jeremiah 41:6.** Ishmael's conduct seems to have been dictated by the malicious desire utterly to frustrate Gedaliah's work.

Weeping By this artifice he lured them into Mizpah. The Septuagint: "as they were ... weeping."

²⁴⁰⁷**Jeremiah 41:7.** *The pit* the cistern, and in ²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 41:9.

²⁴⁰⁸**Jeremiah 41:8.** *Treasures* Hidden stores; which would be of great value to Ishmael in his retreat back to Baalis.

²⁴⁰⁹**Jeremiah 41:9.** *Because of Gedaliah* By the side "of Gedaliah." Ishmael now cast beside Gedaliah's body those of the pilgrims.

²⁴¹²**Jeremiah 41:12.** An open pool still exists at Gibeon, and a large subterranean reservoir fed by a copious natural spring. Gibeon is about two miles north of Mizpah.

²⁴¹⁷**Jeremiah 41:17.** *The habitation of Chimham* The Hebrew text has Geruth-Chemoham, of which place nothing is known. The Masoretes read: Geruth-Chimham, the Khan or Caravanserai of Chimham, son of the rich

Barzillai (marginal reference). The substitution is incapable now of proof or disproof, but it is possibly right.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 42

²⁴⁰¹**Jeremiah 42:1.** Among those delivered by Johanan from Ishmael had been Jeremiah and Baruch (²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 43:6); and to them now all, without exception, come for counsel.

Jezeamiah He is called Azariah in ²⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 43:2. The Septuagint, in both places, call him Azariah. Since there is little reason for identifying him with Jezeamiah the Maachathite (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 40:8), it is probable that the Septuagint is right in calling him in both places Azariah, and that the reading Jezeamiah arose from some scribe assuming that his name must be found in the earlier list.

²⁴⁰⁵**Jeremiah 42:5.** *Between us* Against us, as in ²⁴²⁰Jeremiah 42:19 (margin.)

According to all things literally, “according to the whole word as to which Yahweh thy God shall send thee to us.”

²⁴⁰⁶**Jeremiah 42:6.** *We* The form used here occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, but is the regular form of the pronoun in the Talmud. It is one out of many instances of Jeremiah using the popular instead of the literary language of his times.

²⁴⁰⁷**Jeremiah 42:7.** *After ten days* On previous occasions Jeremiah when consulted answered at once (²⁴⁰³Jeremiah 21:3). The present delay (compare ²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 28:12) was probably granted by God in order to free the minds of the people from the panic caused by the murder of Gedaliah and their fear of Chaldaean vengeance. Jeremiah could have had no doubt that the flight into Egypt was contrary to the tenor of his former prophecies.

²⁴¹⁰**Jeremiah 42:10.** *I repent me* As punishment had been inflicted, the divine justice was satisfied.

²⁴¹²**Jeremiah 42:12.** Or, I will give you compassion before (i.e., obtain pity from) the king of Babylon, and “he shall have mercy upon you, and let you dwell upon your own soil.”

²⁴⁰⁴**Jeremiah 42:14.** Egypt had lost the battle of Carchemish, but it had not been the scene itself of military operations; while Judaea, from the date of the battle of Megiddo, had perpetually been exposed to the actual horrors of war.

²⁴⁰⁶**Jeremiah 42:16,17.** Translate it: “Then shall the sword of which ye are afraid reach you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine whereof ye pine shall cleave close unto you in Egypt, and there shall ye die; and all the men who have set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there shall die ... by the pestilence, nor shall they have anyone that is left or escaped from the evil which I will bring upon them.”

²⁴⁰⁸**Jeremiah 42:18.** *A curse* contempt, or ignominy.

²⁴⁰⁹**Jeremiah 42:19.** The request made in ²⁴⁰³Jeremiah 42:3 has been fulfilled: Yahweh has spoken. The prophet now adds these four verses as a sort of epilogue, in which he urges upon them the several points of the divine message. In the ten days which had intervened between the request and the answer Jeremiah had become aware that neither princes nor people were prepared to obey unless the answer was in accordance with their own wishes. He does therefore his best to convince them, but as usual it was his lot to speak the truth to willful men, and gain no hearing.

²⁴²⁰**Jeremiah 42:20.** *Ye dissembled in your hearts* Or, “ye have led yourselves astray,” i.e., your sending me to ask counsel of God was an act of self-delusion. You felt so sure that God would direct you to go into Egypt, that now that He has spoken to the contrary, you are unable to reconcile yourselves to it.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 43

Jeremiah 43:1-3. These captains belonged to the party who had all along resisted Jeremiah's counsels, and had led Zedekiah astray. Now however that events had proved that the prophet's counsels had been wise and true, they cannot for shame find fault with him, but they affirm that he is under the influence of Baruch, a traitor who has sold himself to the Chaldaeans, and seeks only the hurt of the people.

Jeremiah 43:4 *All the people* Many, nevertheless, would be unwilling agents, compelled to do what their unscrupulous leaders forced upon the community.

Jeremiah 43:5. *All the remnant of Judah that were returned* In this way, the utter depopulation of the land was completed. Thus was fulfilled the predictions of **Jeremiah 24:8-10**, and the sole hope of the nation now centered in the exiles at Babylon (**Jeremiah 24:5-7**).

Jeremiah 43:7. *Tahpanhes* See the **Jeremiah 2:16** note.

Jeremiah 43:8. On arriving at the frontiers of Egypt, the captains would be compelled to halt in order to obtain the king's permission to enter his country. Jeremiah therefore takes the opportunity to predict, first, the downfall of Egypt; and secondly, that of the false gods.

Jeremiah 43:9. *Brickkiln* Possibly, a pavement of brick. Jeremiah was to take a few large stones, such, nevertheless, as he could carry in his hand, and build with them, in the propylaea before the royal palace, something that would serve to represent the dais upon which the seat of kings was usually placed. By hiding them in the clay is meant plastering them over with mortar.

Jeremiah 43:10. *My servant* See **Jeremiah 25:9** note.

That I have hid i.e., that I have embedded in the mortar by the instrumentality of my prophet.

Pavilion Rather, canopy. It probably means the parasol held over kings, which had a tall and thick pole, grasped with both hands, and in the early times a somewhat small circular top.

²⁴⁶¹**Jeremiah 43:11.** According to each man's destiny, he will either die of famine, pestilence, or in battle; or he will be led captive; or be put to death by the executioner.

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 43:12.** *I will kindle* Or, "he shall kindle."

He shall burn them ... i.e., he shall burn the temples, and carry away the gods.

And he shall array literally, "And he shall wrap himself in the land of Egypt as the shepherd wrappeth himself in his cloak, and shall (go forth thence in peace;" i.e., With as great ease as a shepherd throws his cloak round him when going forth to watch his flock by night in the field, so easily shall the king of Babylon take possession of all the glory of Egypt, throw it round him, and depart without anyone resisting his progress.

²⁴⁶³**Jeremiah 43:13.** *Images* Rather, pillars (compare the ²³⁹⁹Isaiah 19:19 note), obelisks.

Beth-shemesh Heliopolis, famous for its obelisks.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 44

Jeremiah's last prophecy (Jeremiah 44), in which he boldly rebukes the tendency of the Jews to idolatry, which seems to have grown only the stronger in their tribulation. The address was evidently made to them at some festival, and though the Jews lived in the hope of being able soon to return to Judaea from Egypt, yet we find that they had spread over the whole land, representatives of their communities having come to Pathros not only from Migdol and Tahpanhes, but even from Noph.

Jeremiah 44:1. *Migdol* Magdolum, a strong fortress on the northern boundary of Egypt.

Jeremiah 44:3. *In that they went to burn incense, and to serve Or,* by going to burn incense to serve thereby other gods.

Jeremiah 44:4. *Howbeit I sent* And I sent.

Jeremiah 44:7. *Your souls* i.e., your own selves.

Jeremiah 44:8. *Cut yourselves off* Rather, cut (them, Jeremiah 44:7) off from you.

Jeremiah 44:9. *The wickedness of their wives* Many accept the reading of the Septuagint: the "wickedness of your princes." "The kings, the princes, the people," and finally "their wives," is a summary enumeration of all classes, by whose united persistence in sin the ruin of their country had been consummated.

Jeremiah 44:11. *All Judah* i.e., all Judah in Egypt, yet even there with exceptions (see Jeremiah 44:14,28), while Judah in Babylon was entirely exempt from this denunciation.

Jeremiah 44:14. Literally, "And there shall not be to the remnant of Judah, which are going to sojourn there in the land of Egypt, one that escapes or remains etc." The word rendered "escapes" means one who slips away, saves himself by a stealthy flight (Genesis 14:13); the word "remains," one who survives when all the rest perish (Job 18:19). Of all those now going down to Egypt none shall return to Judaea except a few miserable fugitives, who shall steal away as men who flee in battle (2

Samuel 19:3). For really years Jewish settlers had gone to Egypt in great numbers, and these old settlers would be treated in the same way as the Egyptians, but these fugitives, with no knowledge of the Egyptian language or ways, would have no friends in the country to aid them, and would also be recognized by the Chaldaeans as inveterate enemies, and mercilessly slain.

²⁴⁴⁵**Jeremiah 44:15.** *Had burned incense* Omit “had;” burned incense. This appeal of the prophet was made at a public festival held somewhere in Pathros, i.e., Upper Egypt: for the women are assembled in a great congregation (compare ²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 26:9), here formed for religious purposes. As they advance in regular procession to worship the moon-goddess, in accordance as it seems with a vow (²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 44:17), Jeremiah meets them, makes the procession halt upon its way, and pronounces in Yahweh’s name words of solemn warning. The reply that all the settlers in Egypt were formally putting themselves under the Queen of heaven’s protection was made by the heads of the congregation.

²⁴⁴⁷**Jeremiah 44:17.** *Whatsoever thing ...* Or, the whole word (or thing) which hath gone forth out of our mouth; i.e., the vows we have made. They would not let Jeremiah’s expostulations prevent the carrying out of the special object which had brought them together: otherwise the Queen of heaven would be offended, and avenge himself.

²⁴⁴⁸**Jeremiah 44:18.** The suppression of this popular idolatry had apparently been regarded with much ill-will in Josiah’s time, and many may even have ascribed to it his defeat at Megiddo. Probably Jehoiakim had again permitted it, but Zedekiah, during the miseries of his reign, had forbidden it, and the people ascribed the fall of Jerusalem to the neglect of their favorite goddess.

²⁴⁴⁹**Jeremiah 44:19.** *Burned ... poured ... did* Or, burn ... pour ... do.

To worship her Rather, to represent her image. The cakes (²⁴⁷⁸Jeremiah 7:18) were made in the shape of a crescent to represent the moon.

Our men i.e., our husbands (margin). They had the authority of their husbands for what they were doing. Jeremiah must leave them alone, and discuss the matter with those who alone had the right to interfere.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:21.** *Them* The various acts of idolatry involved in burning incense to an image.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:22.** *Could no longer bear* The prophet corrects in these words the error of their argument in ^{<2447>}Jeremiah 44:17. God is long-suffering, and therefore punishment follows slowly upon sin.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:24-30.** Earnest as was the preceding expostulation, Jeremiah sees that it has produced no effect. He therefore utters his last warning, and with this last resistance to the sins of a debased and godless people, his earthly ministry closed.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:25.** *And fulfilled with your hand* Your hands. Jeremiah pointed to their hands, in which they were carrying the crescent-shaped cakes which they had vowed to the goddess. Their idolatry therefore was an accomplished deed, as the symbols held in their hands testified.

Ye will surely accomplish Or, Accomplish then your vows. It is not a prediction, but is ironical, and means that as they will take no warning, they must needs have their way.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:26.** *My name shall no more be named ...* God swears by His own great Name that He will be their national God no longer. Yahweh repudiates His covenant-relation toward them.

^{<2447>}**Jeremiah 44:27.** *I will watch* I am watching over them, not for good, but for evil: like a panther (^{<2486>}Jeremiah 5:6) lying in wait to spring upon passengers.

Shall be consumed This is the result of Yahweh's repudiation of the covenant. When He was their God He watched over them for good: now His protection is withdrawn, and He is their enemy, because of the wickedness whereby their rejection was made necessary. See the ^{<2489>}Jeremiah 6:9 note.

^{<2442>}**Jeremiah 44:28.** Literally, "And fugitives from the sword (see ^{<2444>}Jeremiah 44:14) shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, mere of number, i.e., so few that they can be counted: and all the remnant of Judah that are going etc." So unendurable shall be their sufferings in Egypt, that the men now abandoning Judaea in the hope of

finding an asylum there shall be glad to return like runaways from a lost battle.

Whose words ... Whose word shall stand, from Me or from them, i.e., the one prediction, that their descent into Egypt would be their ruin, which they denied.

^{<244B>}**Jeremiah 44:30.** Pharaoh-Hophra came to the throne the year before Jerusalem was captured. He reigned for 19 years, probably the last 10 years as a prisoner. See the notes at ^{<267B>}Jeremiah 37:5; 46:12.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 45

The long catalogue of calamities so consistently denounced by Jeremiah against his country (Jeremiah 45), made a most painful impression upon Baruch's mind. He was of ambitious temperament (^{<24815>}Jeremiah 45:5), and being of noble birth as the grandson of Maaseiah, the governor of Jerusalem in Josiah's time (^{<24818>}2 Chronicles 34:8), and a scribe, he appears to have looked forward either to high office in the state, or far more probably to being invested with prophetic powers. This address tells Baruch to give up his ambitious hopes, and be content with escaping with life only. Like the prophecy of the 70 years of exile, it would become a prediction of good only after really troubles had been undergone and pride was quelled. As regards the place of this prophecy it would come in order of time next to Jeremiah 36, but as that was a public, and this a private prophecy, they would not be written upon the same scroll. When the last memorials of Jeremiah's life were added to the history of the fall of Jerusalem, Baruch attached to them this prediction, which — humbled by years, and the weight of public and private calamity — he now read with very different feelings from those which filled his mind in his youth.

^{<24819>}**Jeremiah 45:1.** *These words* i.e., the words of Jehoiakim's scroll.

^{<24820>}**Jeremiah 45:3.** *Grief to my sorrow* Baruch's sorrow is caused by the sinfulness of the Jewish nation, to which God adds grief by showing how severely it will be punished.

I fainted in Or, "am weary with" (^{<24821>}Psalms 6:6).

^{<24822>}**Jeremiah 45:4.** *land* Or, earth. Baruch's lot was cast in one of those troublous times when God enters into judgment with all flesh (^{<24823>}Jeremiah 45:5). It was not Judaea only but the whole known world that was thrown into turmoil by Nebuchadnezzar's energy (^{<24824>}Jeremiah 25:26).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 46

The prophecies against foreign nations are collected into one scroll (Jeremiah 46—49). Compare Isaiah 13—23; Ezekiel 25—32. They are arranged in two great divisions:

- (a) Jeremiah 46—49:33, spoken in connection with Jeremiah 25; and
- (b) Jeremiah 50—51 spoken at a subsequent date against Babylon.

Between them is placed a prophecy against Elam (^{248B}Jeremiah 49:34-39) spoken in the first year of Zedekiah. The seven earlier prophecies belonging to the fourth year of Jehoiakim were written at the same time, and arranged as they at present stand. It is no doubt intentional that these prophecies against the nations are in number 7 (compare Amos 1:3; 2:4).

Jeremiah 46. This prophecy against Egypt consists of two parts,

- (a) a song of triumph because of her defeat at Carehemish (^{248B}Jeremiah 46:3-12);
- (b) a prediction that the conqueror would invade Egypt from one end to the other (^{246A}Jeremiah 46:14-28).

Possibly a long delay intervened between these predictions.

^{248D}**Jeremiah 46:1.** *Against the Gentiles* Or, concerning the nations (Jeremiah 46—49:33).

^{248D}**Jeremiah 46:2.** *Against ...* i.e., relating to, concerning. So ^{248D}Jeremiah 48:1; 49:1; see the note at ^{248B}Jeremiah 46:13.

Pharaoh-necho See ^{172B}2 Kings 23:29 note.

In (at) *Carchemish* (The Gargamis of the inscriptions, now Jerabis, on the Euphrates, about 16 miles south of Birejik.)

^{248D}**Jeremiah 46:3.** *Order ye ...* “i.e., prepare ye, make ready.” The buckler was a small round target carried by the lightly-armed troops: the shield belonged to the heavily-armed troops, and was large enough to protect the whole body.

Jeremiah 46:4. From the infantry the prophet proceeds to the chariots, in which the Egyptians placed great confidence.

Get up, ye horsemen Or, “mount the steeds.”

Furbish i.e., polish, sharpen.

Brigandines In old times brigand meant a soldier, and we still call a division of an army a brigade, and a commander a brigadier, i.e., a brigandier, or captain of brigands. Similarly a brigandine means a soldier’s equipment, and is put here for a coat of mail.

Jeremiah 46:5. Literally, “Why have I seen? They are terror-stricken! they are giving way back!” The Egyptian host feels that the battle is lost, and overborne by the enemy loses heart, and in despair, yet not without a struggle, gives way. It is remarkable, that while Jeremiah in his warning addressed to Jerusalem uses the most simple and unadorned prose, his language concerning the Gentile nations is, on the contrary, full of brilliant poetry.

Look not back turn not back. They make no halt, and no attempt to rally.

Fear was round about The prophets watch-word, Magor-missabib (see 6:25).

Jeremiah 46:6. Translate it: “The swift shall not flee away, and the hero shall not escape: in the north on the bank of the river Euphrates they shall stumble and fall.”

Jeremiah 46:7. In **Jeremiah 46:3-6** we saw only a mighty army marshalling for battle, and its hasty flight. In **Jeremiah 46:7-12** the prophet tells us at whose defeat we have been present.

A flood the Nile. The metaphor describing the advance of the Egyptian army is naturally drawn from the annual overflow of their own sacred stream.

Whose waters are moved ... literally, his waters toss to and fro as the rivers, the natural branches of the Nile in Lower Egypt.

Jeremiah 46:9. Rather, Go up, advance, ye horses; and drive furiously, ye chariots; and let the mighty men go forth. They march out of Egypt, arranged in three divisions, cavalry, chariots, and infantry, to begin

the campaign. The armies of Egypt were composed chiefly of mercenaries. Cush (see the margin), the Nubian negro, and Phut, the Libyans of Mauritania, supplied the heavy-armed soldiers (^{246B}Jeremiah 46:3); and Ludim, the Hamite Lydians of North Africa (see ^{010B}Genesis 10:13 note), a weaker race, served as light-armed troops.

^{246D}**Jeremiah 46:10.** Rather, But that “day belongeth to the LORD Yahweh of hosts.” They march forth in haughty confidence, but that day, the day to which they are looking forward in proud hope of victory, is Yahweh’s day, a day on which they will be the victims sacrificed in His honor.

^{246E}**Jeremiah 46:11.** *Balm* i.e., balsam, the usual remedy for wounds (^{248D}Jeremiah 8:22).

In vain shalt ... Or, in vain hast thou multiplied medicines: healing-plaster hast thou none. Nothing shall avail to heal the blow.

^{246F}**Jeremiah 46:12.** *The land* The earth; the world rings with the cry of grief.

Against the mighty Against the mighty man, i.e., one mighty man against another. The champions hired to fight Egypt’s battle get in one another’s way, and so are slaughtered together.

^{246G}**Jeremiah 46:13.** A new prophecy, foretelling the successful invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, has been appended to the hymn of triumph, because they both relate to the same kingdom. This prophecy was probably spoken in Egypt to warn the Jews there, that the country which they were so obstinately determined to make their refuge would share the fate of their native land.

How ... shoud come Or, concerning the coming “of Nebuchadnezzar.”

^{246H}**Jeremiah 46:14.** *The sword shall devour* “The sword” hath devoured “those round about thee.” One after another the nations have been consumed by Nebuchadnezzar; and now at length Tyre, which so long had withstood him, has fallen, and his forces are about to fall upon Egypt (^{241E}Jeremiah 2:16 note). Hence, the summons to arrange themselves in their ranks, and to prepare for battle by putting on their armor.

²⁴⁶⁵**Jeremiah 46:15.** Translate it: “Why is thy mighty one cast down? He stood not, because Yahweh thrust him down.” The “mighty one” is explained by the Septuagint to be the bull Apis. Thus:

- (1) the chief deity of Egypt (²⁴⁶⁵Jeremiah 46:15);
- (2) the army of mercenaries (²⁴⁶⁶Jeremiah 46:16);
- (3) the king, Pharaoh (²⁴⁶⁷Jeremiah 46:17), are the three upon whom the Egyptians trusted.

²⁴⁶⁶**Jeremiah 46:16.** Literally, as in the margin, i.e., Yahweh hath made many to stumble.

Arise ... The Egyptian army being composed of mercenaries, has no patriotic feeling and immediately that the battle is lost, they propose to abandon the country which has hired them, and return each to his native land.

²⁴⁶⁷**Jeremiah 46:17.** Translate it with the versions: “They have called (or, Call ye) the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt — A noise: he hath overstepped the appointed time.” For this custom of giving prophetic names see ²⁴⁰⁸Jeremiah 20:3; ²³⁰⁸Isaiah 8:3, ... The words mean that Pharaoh is a mere empty sound, and that he has allowed the years of prosperity, which he enjoyed at the beginning of his reign, to pass by; having misused them, nothing now remains but his ruin.

²⁴⁶⁸**Jeremiah 46:18.** *As Tabor is* Omit “is.” “He shall come like a Tabor among the mountains, and like a Carmel by the sea.” Tabor rises in the form of a truncated cone to the height of about 1,350 feet above the plain of Esdraelon, its total height above the sea level being 1,805 feet. Its shape and the wide extent of the plain around it make it a far more conspicuous object than other mountains in sight of equal elevation. Similarly, Carmel is a most commanding mountain, because it rises from the edge of the wide expanse of the Mediterranean.

²⁴⁶⁹**Jeremiah 46:19.** Literally, “O thou inhabitant daughter of Egypt,” an equivalent here for Egypt and its whole population.

Furnish thyself ... literally, make for thee vessels of banishment, not merely the packages necessary, but their outfit generally.

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 46:20.** *Is like* Or, is. Her god was the steer Apis (²⁴⁶⁵Jeremiah 46:15), and she is the spouse.

But destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north More probably, “a gadfly from the north has come upon her.” This is a sort of insect which stings the oxen and drives them to madness. Compare ²³⁷⁸Isaiah 7:18.

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 46:21.** Rather, “Also her hirelings in the midst of her are like calves of the stall.” The mercenaries of Egypt — Nubians, Moors, and Lydians (²⁴⁶⁹Jeremiah 46:9) — were destroyed at the battle of Carchemish, and their place was taken by hirelings from Asia Minor, Carians, and Ionians, whom Hophra took into his pay to the number of 30,000 men. These he settled in the midst of Egypt, in the fertile lands above Bubastis, in the Delta, where, well paid and fed and with great privileges, they became as calves of the stall. Their mutiny cost Hophra his crown.

For they also are turned back ... literally, “for they also have lurched the back, they flee together, they stand not: for the day of their destruction is come upon them, the time of their visitations.”

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 46:22.** *The voice thereof* Her voice, i.e., the voice of Egypt. The word here probably means the busy sound of life and activity in the towns of Egypt, the tramping of her hosts, and the turmoil of camp and city. All this at the approach of the Chaldaean army shall depart, as the snake flees away when disturbed in its haunts by the wood-cutters.

March with an army Advance with might.

With axes The comparison of the Chaldaean warriors to woodcutters arose from their being armed with axes. As the Israelites did not use the battle-axe, their imagination would be the more forcibly struck by this weapon.

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 46:23.** Or, “They have cut down her forest, saith Yahweh, for it is impenetrable,” i.e., just as a pathless forest must be cleared to assist agriculture and the passage to and fro of men, so must the false worship and the material prosperity of Egypt be overthrown.

Grasshoppers The invading host advances as multitudinous as the locusts which consume the whole vegetation of the land on which they alight.

²⁴⁶²**Jeremiah 46:24.** *The daughter ...* i.e., the inhabitants “of Egypt shall be disgraced.”

²⁴⁶⁵**Jeremiah 46:25.** *The multitude of No* Rather, Amon of No. Ammon or Jupiter-Ammon was the first of the supreme triad of Thebes. He was the deity invisible and unfathomable, whose name signifies “the concealed.” No-Amon, is the sacred city of Thebes, the capital of Upper Egypt. First then Yahweh’s anger falls upon the representatives of the highest divine and human powers, Amon of No and Pharaoh. It next punishes Egypt generally, and her gods and her kings, for each city had its special divinity, and inferior rulers were placed in the several parts of the country. Finally, Pharaoh is again mentioned, with “all who trust in him,” i.e., the Jews, who had made Egypt their confidence and not God.

²⁴⁶⁶**Jeremiah 46:26.** *Afterward ...* The invasion of Nebuchadnezzar is to be a passing calamity, the severity of which will be felt chiefly by the Jews, but no subjugation of Egypt is to be attempted, and after the Chaldaean army has withdrawn things will resume their former course.

²⁴⁶⁷**Jeremiah 46:27,28.** These two verses are a repetition of ²⁴⁶⁸Jeremiah 30:10,11, with those slight variations which Jeremiah always makes when quoting himself. Egypt’s fall and restoration have been foretold; but the prophet closes with a word of exhortation to the many erring Jews who dwelt there. Why should they flee from their country, and trust in a pagan power, instead of endeavoring to live in a manner worthy of the noble destiny which was their true glory and ground of confidence?

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 47

Jeremiah 47:1. *that Pharaoh* Pharaoh-Necho though defeated at Carchemish, was probably able to seize Gaza upon his retreat, when obviously the possession of so strong a fortress would be most useful to him to prevent the entrance of the victorious Chaldaeans into Egypt.

Jeremiah 47:2. *Waters rise up* A metaphor for the assembling of an army (compare the marginal references).

Out of the north The Chaldaean army must cross the Euphrates at Carchemish.

An overflowing flood Or, “torrent.” To understand the metaphors of the Bible we must keep the natural phenomena of the country in mind. In Palestine rivers are torrents, dashing furiously along in the rainy seasons, and dry, or nearly so, in the summer.

All that is therein The marginal rendering contrasts the wealth of Egypt, which forms its fullness, and the inhabitants.

Jeremiah 47:3. *His strong horses* War-horses, chargers.

The rushing of his chariots Rather, the rattling, the crashing noise which they make as they advance.

For feebleness of hands The Philistines flee in such panic that a father would not even turn round to see whether his sons were effecting their escape or not.

Jeremiah 47:4. *Because of the day that cometh to spoil* “Because” the day has come “to devastate.”

The Philistines are called Tyre’s remaining (i.e., last) helper, because all besides who could have assisted her have already succumbed to the Chaldaean power. The judgment upon Philistia was in connection with that upon Tyre, and it was fulfilled by expeditions sent out by Nebuchadnezzar under his lieutenants to ravage the country and supply his main army with provisions.

The country of Caphtor The coastland of Caphtor. The Philistines came from the coast of the Egyptian Delta, and are called “a remnant” because they had been greatly reduced in numbers, partly by the long war of Psammetichus against Ashdod, partly by the capture of Gaza (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:1), and partly by Assyrian invasions.

^{<2475>}**Jeremiah 47:5.** *Baldness* Extreme mourning (see ^{<2466>}Jeremiah 16:6).

Is cut off Others render, is speechless through grief.

With the remnant of their valley Others, O remnant of their valley, how long wilt thou cut thyself? Their valley is that of Gaza and Ashkelon, the low-lying plain, usually called the Shefelah, which formed the territory of the Philistines. The reading of the Septuagint is remarkable: “the remnant of the Anakim,” which probably would mean Gath, the home of giants (^{<0970>}1 Samuel 17:4).

^{<2476>}**Jeremiah 47:6.** Or, Alas, Sword of Yahweh, how long wilt thou not rest? For the answer, see ^{<2477>}Jeremiah 47:7.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 48

This prophecy (Jeremiah 48) is an amplification of Isaiah 15—16, and also introduces two verses, ^{248B}Jeremiah 48:43,44, from ²³⁴⁷Isaiah 24:17,18.

Jeremiah's introduction of passages from older writers being accepted, it would seem that the passages borrowed are so inwoven with that which is Jeremiah's own, that they cannot be omitted as a later interpolation without destroying the whole. On the other hand in that which is the writer's own, and even in many of the alterations of the borrowed passages, Jeremiah's mode of expression is so clearly to be recognized that the whole must be acknowledged to be his.

From ²³⁶³Isaiah 16:13 it has been conjectured that Isaiah had an ancient prophecy before him, and that Jeremiah drew from the same source. Bearing in mind the number of prophetic writings mentioned in the Books of Chronicles which have not come down to us, there is nothing unreasonable in such a supposition.

^{248D}**Jeremiah 48:1.** *Against Moab* Concerning Moab.

Is confounded Is brought to shame.

Misgab The high fort; some special fortress, probably Kir-haraseth (¹²⁸⁶2 Kings 3:25).

^{248E}**Jeremiah 48:2.** *No more praise of Moab* literally, "The glory of Moab is no more," i.e., Moab has no more cause for boasting.

Heshbon This town now belonged to the Ammonites (²⁴⁰⁸Jeremiah 49:3) but was on the border. The enemy encamped there arranges the plan of his campaign against Moab.

In the original there is a play of words upon the names Heshbon and Madmen.

^{248F}**Jeremiah 48:3.** Omit shall be. "Spoiling and great destruction," literally breaking, is the cry heard from Horonaim (²³¹⁶Isaiah 15:5).

^{248G}**Jeremiah 48:4.** *Moab* Probably the city elsewhere called Ar-Moab. See the Septuagint of this verse.

Jeremiah 48:5. Luhith was situated upon an eminence, and Jeremiah describes one set of weeping fugitives as pressing close upon another.

In the going down of Horonaim ... Rather, in the descent of Horonaim they have heard the distresses of the cry of breaking, i.e., the cry of distress occasioned by the ruin inflicted by the enemy. It was situated in a hollow, probably near the Dead Sea.

Jeremiah 48:6. *Like the heath* Or, Like a destitute man. See the marginal reference note.

Jeremiah 48:7. *Works* Possibly the products of labor. The versions render fortifications.

Chemosh As the national god of Moab (⁻⁰²¹²⁹Numbers 21:29), he represents the whole land; and his being led into captivity implies the total ruin of those under his protection. His name here spelled Chemish is repeated in Car-chemish, i.e., the fortress of Chemish.

Jeremiah 48:8. *The valley* The lowlands on the east bank of the Jordan, and at the top of the Dead Sea.

The plain An upland pasture; it answers very much to downs: so in ⁻²⁴⁸²¹Jeremiah 48:21.

Jeremiah 48:10. *Deceitfully* Better as in the margin.

Jeremiah 48:11. Moab from the time it conquered the Emims (⁻⁰⁸¹¹⁹Deuteronomy 2:9,10), and so became a nation, had retained quiet possession of its land, and enjoyed comparative prosperity. From the Moabite Stone we gather that King Mesha, after the death of Ahab threw off the yoke of Israel; nor except for a short time under Jeroboam II was Israel able to bring the Moabites back into subjection. They gradually drove the Reubenites back, and recovered most of the territory taken from the Amorites by Moses, and which originally had belonged to them.

He hath settled on his lees Good wine was thought to be the better for being left to stand upon its sediment (⁻²²⁵¹⁶Isaiah 25:6), and in all cases its flavor was rendered thereby stronger (marginal reference). "By being emptied from vessel to vessel" it became vapid and tasteless. So a nation by going into captivity is rendered tame and feeble. By his taste is meant the flavor of the wine, and so Moab's national character.

²⁴⁸¹²**Jeremiah 48:12.** *I will send* tilts “unto him and they shall” tilt “him, and they shall empty his vessels, and break their” pitchers “in pieces.” “Pitchers” originally meant “skins,” but the word came to signify small earthenware jars (²³¹¹⁴Isaiah 30:14): thus the Chaldaeans shall destroy of Moab everything that has contained the wine of her political life both small and great.

²⁴⁸¹³**Jeremiah 48:13.** *Israel was ashamed of Beth-el* After Salmaneser had carried Israel away, they could trust no longer in the calf of Bethel established by Jeroboam.

²⁴⁸¹⁴**Jeremiah 48:14.** *Mighty* Heroes, veteran warriors.

²⁴⁸¹⁵**Jeremiah 48:15.** Rather, “Moab is spoiled,” and her cities have gone up, i.e., in smoke, have been burned (⁴⁶⁸¹⁰Joshua 8:20,21). Others render, “The waster of Moab and of her towns is coming up to the attack, and her chosen youths are gone down to the slaughter.”

²⁴⁸¹⁶**Jeremiah 48:16.** *Near to come* Twenty-three years elapsed between the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when this prophecy was spoken, and its accomplishment by the invasion of Moab five years after the capture of Jerusalem. So slowly does God’s justice move onward.

²⁴⁸¹⁷**Jeremiah 48:17.** The lamentation over Moab uttered by those “round about him,” i.e., the neighboring nations, and those “that know his name,” nations more remote, who know little more than that, there is such a people, takes the form of an elegy. The metaphorical expressions, “staff of strength,” and “rod” or “scepter of beauty,” indicate the union of power and splendor in the Moabite kingdom.

²⁴⁸¹⁸**Jeremiah 48:18.** *Sit in thirst* Jeremiah draws a picture of the conquered inhabitants, collected outside the walls, waiting for their captors to march them away to the slave mart. The enemy occupied with plundering the houses of Dibon thinks little of the hunger and thirst of his prisoners.

Strong holds The remains of the fortifications of Dibon are still visible.

²⁴⁸¹⁹**Jeremiah 48:19.** *Aroer* On the Arnon, due south of Dibon. If Dibon falls, the turn of Aroer will come next, and therefore its inhabitants are to be on the look out, asking for news.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:20.** Or, “Moab is ashamed, because she (Dibon) is broken” by her fortifications being battered down.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:21.** *Holon* This place apparently took its name from caverns in its neighborhood.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:22.** *Beth-diblathaim* i.e., “the house of the two cakes of figs,” perhaps so called from two hills in its neighborhood. ^{<2003>}Hosea 1:3 note.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:23.** *Beth-meon* Meon is probably the Moabite Olympus, and thus Beth-Baal-Meon, the full name of this town (^{<637>}Joshua 13:17), would signify the place where the heavenly Baal was worshipped.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:24.** *Kerioth* A synonym of Ar, the old capital of Moab. It appears to have been a considerable place, and has been identified with El-Korriat, situated on the long ridge of Mount Attarus.

Bozrah Probably the Bosora mentioned in 1 Macc. 5:26 in company with Bosor, i.e., Bezer. Since the word means sheepfolds, it was no doubt a common name for places in this upland region, fit only for pasturage.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:25.** *The horn* i.e., his pride (marginal reference); his arm, i.e., his strength (^{<2475>}Jeremiah 17:5).

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:26.** *Make ye him drunken* With the wine-cup of God’s fury, until terror deprive him of his senses.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:27.** *Was he found ...* Or, “was he found among thieves that so often as thou speakest of him” thou waggest thy head? — in contempt for a fallen enemy.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:28.** *Dwell in the rock* See ^{<2482>}Jeremiah 4:29. The sole chance of escape is refuge in inaccessible fastnesses.

In the sides ... On the further side “of the mouth of the pit.” The wild rock pigeon invariably selects deep ravines for its nesting and roosting.

^{<2482>}**Jeremiah 48:30.** *But it shall not be so* Most commentators translate, “I know, saith Jehovah, his arrogancy, and the emptiness of his boastings; they have worked emptiness.”

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:31.** *Mine heart ...* Rather, “there shall be mourning for” etc.

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:32.** Or, “More than the weeping of Jazer” over its ruined vineyards “will I weep for thee, O vine of Sibmah.” Compare the marginal reference. Jazer lies in an upland valley about 15 miles north of Heshbon.

Thy plants ... “Thy branches are gone over the sea, i.e.” the power of Moab is felt even on the western side of the Dead Sea; “they reached etc.”

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:33.** *Winepresses* Rather, “wine-vats,” into which the wine runs from the presses.

Their shouting shall be no shouting The vintage shout is — silence. For the vines have been destroyed, and desolation reigns where once was the joyful cry of those who tread the grapes.

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:34.** The meaning is that, taking up the lamentation of Heshbon, the Moabites break forth into a wail, heard as far as Elealeh, scarcely two miles distant (⁴⁰²³⁷Numbers 32:37), but thence spreading over the land to towns on the southern and southwestern borders of the land.

An heifer of three years old Applied in ²³¹⁷⁵Isaiah 15:5 to Zoar, but here to Horonaim. Some take “an heifer” as a proper name, and render it: “Eglah for the third part” (compare ²³⁰²⁴Isaiah 19:24). Zoar, Horonaim, and Eglah formed a tripolis, or confederacy of three towns, and Eglah might therefore be put after either one or the other.

Nimrim Probably the Wady-en-Nemeirah at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea.

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:36.** *Like pipes* A wind instrument, used at funerals (⁴⁰²³Matthew 9:23).

The riches that he hath gotten literally, “that which remains over, a superfluity.”

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:37.** *Cuttings* Compare ²⁴⁰¹⁶Jeremiah 16:6, and marginal references.

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:38.** *Generally* Rather, entirely.

²⁴⁸³**Jeremiah 48:39.** Literally, “How is it broken down! they wail! How hath Moab tutored the back in shame! Yea, Moab is become a laughter and a terror (²⁴⁷⁷Jeremiah 17:17) to all who are round about him.”

²⁴⁸⁰**Jeremiah 48:40.** The rapid and irresistible attack of Nebuchadnezzar is compared to the impetuous dash of the eagle on its prey (²⁵³⁹Deuteronomy 28:49).

²⁴⁸¹**Jeremiah 48:41.** *Surprised* captured by force.

²⁴⁸⁵**Jeremiah 48:45.** *Because of the force* Rather, without force. Translate it: “The fugitives have stood, (i.e., halted) powerless in the shadow of Heshbon.” As Heshbon was the capital of the Ammonites, the sense is that the defeated Moabites looked to Ammon for protection.

But afire ... Not only will Ammon refuse aid to Moab, but her ruin is to come forth from Heshbon. To show this Jeremiah has recourse to the old triumphal poetry of the Mosaic age (marginal reference).

The corner i.e., of the beard ... “the crown of the head.” The fire of war consumes both far and near, both hair and beard, i.e., everything that it can singe and destroy.

The tumultuous ones literally, “sons of the battle-shout,” the brave Moabite warriors.

²⁴⁸⁷**Jeremiah 48:47.** *Bring again the captivity* (Or, “restore the prosperity.”) A similar promise is given to Egypt, Ammon, and Elam (²⁴⁴⁵Jeremiah 46:26; 49:6).

Thus far ... Moab An editorial note by the same hand as the last words of ²⁵⁰⁵Jeremiah 51:64.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 49

To the north of the Moabites lay the country of the Ammonites, a closely allied nation (^{<01957>}Genesis 19:37,38) who claimed that the land assigned to the tribe of Gad had originally belonged to them (^{<07113>}Judges 11:13). They seem to have been far less civilized than the Moabites, and possessed but one stronghold, Rabbah, not devoting themselves to agriculture, but wandering with their flocks over the Arabian wastes. When, however, Tiglath-Pileser carried the inhabitants of Gilead into captivity, the Ammonites occupied much of the vacant land, and many of them probably adopted a more settled life; at this time they even possessed Heshbon, once the frontier town between Reuben and Gad. It is this seizure of the territory of Gad which forms the starting-point of Jeremiah's prediction. Older prophecies against Ammon are ^{<3001>}Amos 1:13-15; ^{<3108>}Zephaniah 2:8-11.

^{<2401>}**Jeremiah 49:1.** *Hath Israel no sons?* i.e., the Ammonites in seizing Gilead have acted as if the country had no rightful owner. The sons of Israel were to return from captivity, and the land was their hereditary property.

Their king Milcom (and in ^{<2403>}Jeremiah 49:3), see the margin. The Ammonite god stands for the Ammonites just as Chemosh (^{<2407>}Jeremiah 48:7) is the equivalent of the Moabites.

Inherit i.e., take possession of.

^{<2402>}**Jeremiah 49:2.** *Rabbah* i.e., the "great city." See ^{<3027>}2 Samuel 12:27 note for a distinction between Rabbah, the citadel, and the town itself, lying below upon the Jabbok.

Daughters i.e., unwalled villages (and in ^{<2403>}Jeremiah 49:3).

Shall Israel be heir ... i.e., "shall be victor over his victors;" compare ^{<3001>}Micah 1:15.

^{<2403>}**Jeremiah 49:3.** *Ai* Not the town on the west of the Jordan (^{<3072>}Joshua 7:2); a place not mentioned elsewhere. For Ai some read Ar.

Hedges Fields were not divided by hedges until recent times; the term probably means the walls which enclose the vineyards (^{4022b}Numbers 22:24).

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:4.** *Thy flowing valley* The (fertile) valley in which Rabbah was situated. The Septuagint again has: “in the valleys of the Anakim,” as in ^{2400b}Jeremiah 47:5 (see the note).

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:5.** *Every man right forth* The Ammonites will live in terror of the tribes which rove in the neighborhood, and at the slightest alarm will flee straight away without resistance.

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:6.** In 1 Macc. 5:6,7, the Ammonites appear again as a powerful nation.

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:7-22.** Edom stretched along the south of Judah from the border of Moab on the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean and the Arabian deserts, and held the same relation to Judah which Moab held toward the kingdom of Israel. Although expressly reserved from attack by Moses (^{4000b}Deuteronomy 2:5), a long feud caused the Edomites to cherish so bitter an enmity against Judah, that they exulted with cruel joy over the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldaeans, and showed great cruelty toward those who fled to them for refuge.

Of the prophecies against Edom the first eight verses of Obadiah are also found in Jeremiah (see the marginal references). As Jeremiah wrote before the capture of Jerusalem, and Obadiah apparently after it (see ^{2400b}Jeremiah 49:13,14), it might seem certain that Obadiah copied from Jeremiah. Others held the reverse view; while some consider that the two prophets may both have made common use of some ancient prediction. See the introduction to Obadiah.

The prophecy is divisible into three strophes. In the first (^{2400b}Jeremiah 49:7-13), the prophet describes Edom as terror-stricken.

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:7.** *Teman* A strip of land on the northeast of Edom, put here for Edom generally. Its inhabitants were among those “children of the East” famed for wisdom, because of their skill in proverbs and dark sayings.

^{2400b}**Jeremiah 49:8.** *Dwell deep* (^{2400b}Jeremiah 49:30). The Dedanites, who were used to travel through the Edomite territory with their caravans,

are advised to retire as far as possible into the Arabian deserts to be out of the way of the invaders.

²⁴⁹⁰**Jeremiah 49:9.** Translate it: “If vintagers come to thee, they will not leave any gleanings; if thieves by night, they will destroy their fill.”

²⁴⁹⁰**Jeremiah 49:10.** *But* For. The reason why the invaders destroy Edom so completely. His secret places are the hiding-places in the mountains of Seir.

His seed Esau’s seed, the Edomites; his brethren are the nations joined with him in the possession of the land, Amalek, and perhaps the Simeonites; his neighbors are Dedan, Tema, Buz.

²⁴⁹¹**Jeremiah 49:11.** As with Moab (²⁴⁸⁷Jeremiah 48:47), and Ammon (²⁴⁹⁵Jeremiah 49:6), so there is mercy for Edom. The widows shall be protected, and in the orphans of Edom the nation shall once again revive.

²⁴⁹²**Jeremiah 49:12.** Translate it: “Behold they whose rule was not to drink of the cup shall surely drink etc.” It was not the ordinary manner of God’s people to suffer from His wrath: but now when they are drinking of the wine-cup of fury (²⁴⁵⁵Jeremiah 25:15), how can those not in covenant with Him hope to escape?

²⁴⁹⁴**Jeremiah 49:14-18.** The second strophe, Edom’s chastisement.

²⁴⁹⁴**Jeremiah 49:14.** *Rumour* Or, “revelation.”

Ambassador Or, messenger, i.e., herald. The business of an ambassador is to negotiate, of a herald to carry a message.

²⁴⁹⁵**Jeremiah 49:15.** *Small ...* Rather, small among the nations, i.e., of no political importance.

²⁴⁹⁶**Jeremiah 49:16.** Edom’s “terribleness” consisted in her cities being hewn in the sides of inaccessible rocks, from where she could suddenly descend for predatory warfare, and retire to her fastnesses without fear of reprisals.

The clefts of the rock Or, the fastnesses of Sela, the rock-city, Petra (see ²³⁶⁰Isaiah 16:1).

The hill i.e., Bozrah.

²⁴⁰⁷**Jeremiah 49:17.** Better, “And Edom shall become a terror: every passer by shalt be terrified, and shudder etc.”

²⁴⁰⁸**Jeremiah 49:18.** *Neighbour ...* Admah and Zeboim.

A son of man i.e., “Any man.” From 536 A.D. onward, Petra suddenly vanishes from the pages of history. Only in the present century was its real site discovered.

²⁴⁰⁹**Jeremiah 49:19-22.** Concluding strophe. The fall of Edom is compared to the state of a flock worried by an enemy strong as a lion (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 4:7), and swift as an eagle.

²⁴⁰⁹**Jeremiah 49:19.** *The swelling of Jordan* Or, the pride of Jordan, the thickets on his banks (marginal reference note).

Against the habitation of the strong Or, to the abiding pasturage. The lion stalks forth from the jungle to attack the fold, sure to find sheep there because of the perennial (evergreen) pasturage: “but I will suddenly make him (the flock, Edom) run away from her (or it, the pasturage).”

And who is a chosen ... Better, and I will appoint over it, the abandoned land of Edom, him who is chosen, i.e., my chosen ruler Nebuchadnezzar.

Who will appoint me the time? The plaintiff, in giving notice of a suit, had to mention the time when the defendant must appear (see the margin). Yahweh identifies himself with Nebuchadnezzar (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 25:9), and shows the hopelessness of Edom’s cause. For who is like Yahweh, His equal in power and might? Who will dare litigate with Him, and question His right? etc.

²⁴¹⁰**Jeremiah 49:20.** *Surely the least ...* Rather, Surely they will worry them, the feeble ones of the flock: surely their pasture shall be terror-stricken over them. No shepherd can resist Nebuchadnezzar (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 49:19), but all flee, and leave the sheep unprotected. Thereupon, the Chaldaeans enter, and treat the poor feeble flock so barbarously, that the very fold is horrified at their cruelty.

²⁴¹¹**Jeremiah 49:21.** *Is moved* Quakes.

At the cry ... The arrangement is much more poetical in the Hebrew, The shriek — to the sea of Suph (²⁴⁰⁹Exodus 10:19 note) is heard its sound.

Jeremiah 49:22. Nebuchadnezzar shall swoop down like an eagle, the emblem of swiftness.

Jeremiah 49:23. Though the superscription is confined to Damascus, the prophecy relates to the whole of Aram, called by us Syria, which was divided into two parts, the northern, of which Hamath was the capital, and the southeastern, belonging to Damascus.

Hamath is confounded Or, is ashamed. For Hamath see ^{<2310>}Isaiah 10:9 note. Arpad lay about fourteen miles north of Aleppo, at a place now called Tel Erfad.

Fainthearted The sinews are relaxed unknit, through terror.

There is sorrow on the sea In the sea. As the sea is used (marginal reference) of the agitation of the thoughts of evil men, its sense here also probably is, there is sorrow, or rather anxiety, in the agitated hearts of the Syrians.

Jeremiah 49:24. *And turneth* Omit and. The original is a rapid sequence of unconnected sentences. “Damascus is unnerved; she turned to flee, and a trembling seized her; anguish and writhings took hold of her etc.”

Jeremiah 49:25. An exclamation of sorrow wrung from the prophet at the thought of the people of Damascus remaining to be slaughtered. The words my joy express the prophet’s own sympathy. The praise of Damascus for beauty has been universal from the days of Naaman (^{<1312>}2 Kings 5:12), to those of recent travelers.

Jeremiah 49:27. See the marginal reference and ^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:14 note.

Jeremiah 49:28. Hazor, derived from a word signifying an unwallled village, is a general appellative of those Arab tribes who were partially settled, while Kedar signifies the Bedawin, who used only tents. Some think that Hazor is another way of spelling Jetor, i.e., Ituraea, whose inhabitants, with the Kedarenes, would naturally be called the sons of the East.

Shall smite Or, smote.

Jeremiah 49:29. *Curtains* The hangings of the tents.

Fear is on every side Magor-missabib (see ²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 6:25 note); a cry, indicating the panic which followed the unexpected onset of the enemy.

Jeremiah 49:30. *A purpose against you* Others read “against them” (the wealthy nation, ²⁴⁴⁸Jeremiah 49:31).

Jeremiah 49:31. *The wealthy nation* Or, a nation at rest, living securely and in confidence.

Which dwell alone They dwell alone, i.e., have neither alliances with other nations, nor contact by commerce.

Jeremiah 49:32. *Them ... corners* Or, those who clip the corners of their beards (compare ²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 9:26).

Jeremiah 49:33. *Dragons* i.e., jackals.

Jeremiah 49:34. *Against Elam* Or, concerning Elam. This country, better known as Susiana, is the modern Chuzistan, and lies on the east of Chaldaea, from which it is separated by the Tigris. In the cuneiform inscriptions we find the Elamites on friendly terms with Babylon. The suggestion therefore that they served as auxiliaries in the Chaldaean army in the expedition against Judah is not improbable. It was in the first year of Zedekiah that this prophecy was written, and thus it is a little prior to the prophecies against Babylon (²⁵¹⁹Jeremiah 51:59), which immediately follow. The words, “the Elam,” appear in the Septuagint in ²⁵²⁴Jeremiah 25:14, followed by this prophecy, while in ²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 26:1 we find, “In the beginning of the reign of king Zedekiah there was this word about Elam,” followed in ²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 49:2 by the prophecy (Jeremiah 46 of the Hebrew) against Egypt. This is a proof simply of the confusion which existed in the Egyptian transcripts of the prophecies relating to the nations.

Jeremiah 49:35. The bow was the national weapon of Elam, and therefore the “chief of their might,” that on which their strength in war depended.

Jeremiah 49:36. In a whirlwind violent gales seem to blow from every quarter, and whatever is exposed to their fury they scatter over the whole country. With similar violence the whole nation of Elam shall be dispersed far and wide.

~~<4488>~~ **Jeremiah 49:38.** Literally, king and princes. Elam will lose its independence, and henceforward have no native ruler with his attendant officers.

~~<4489>~~ **Jeremiah 49:39.** *Elam* Elam was subject to Babylon (~~<7000>~~ Daniel 8:2), and its capital Shushan a favorite residence of the Persian kings (~~<7000>~~ Esther 1:2). Of its subsequent fate we know little; the Elamites continued to exist, and members of their nation were present at Pentecost among those chosen to represent the Gentile world at the first preaching of the Gospel (~~<4489>~~ Acts 2:9).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 50

Many critics have endeavored to show that this prophecy (Jeremiah 50—51) was not written by Jeremiah. Others grant that Jeremiah was the true author, yet assert that the prophecy has been largely interpolated. The arguments for its authenticity are briefly stated in the following:

- (a) The superscription (~~2501~~Jeremiah 50:1), and the appended history (~~2515~~Jeremiah 51:59-64);
- (b) The general admission that the style is Jeremiah's;
- (c) The fact that the author was living at Jerusalem (~~2515~~Jeremiah 50:5, where read "hitherward," not "thitherward");
- (d) The Medes and not the Persians are described as the future conquerors of Babylon (~~2511~~Jeremiah 51:11,28).

The knowledge of topography and Babylonian customs is not more than Jeremiah may have learned from the Chaldeans when they were at Jerusalem in the fourth, and again in the eleventh year of Jehoiakim: and there was constant contact by letter and otherwise between Babylon and Jerusalem.

The prophecy may be considered essential to the right discharge by Jeremiah of the duties of his office. He had foretold the capture and ruin of Jerusalem, not from love to Babylon, but as a necessary act of the divine justice, and as the one remedy for Judah's sins. He recognized the Chaldeans as Yahweh's ministers; but recognizing also that they practiced wanton barbarities, and claimed the glory for themselves and their gods, he proclaimed that Babylon must be punished for its cruelty, its pride, and its idolatry.

The date is fixed by ~~2515~~Jeremiah 51:59. With this agrees the internal evidence.

Though deficient in arrangement the prophecy is full of grand ideas; and the similarity between passages in this prophecy and Isaiah illustrates the large knowledge which Jeremiah evidently possessed of the earlier Scriptures, and the manner in which, consciously or unconsciously, he has perpetually imitated them in his own writings.

Jeremiah 50:1. *Against ... against* Concerning.

Jeremiah 50:2. *Confounded ... confounded* ashamed ... ashamed.

Merodach This deity, in the inscriptions Marduk, was the tutelary god of Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar, who called his son Evil-Merodach, appears to have been especially devoted to his service. He was really identical with Bel, and his equivalent among the planets was Jupiter: and as such he was styled “King of heaven and earth.”

Jeremiah 50:3. *Out of the north* Media lay to the northwest of Babylon. This constant use of the north, the quarter where the sun never shines, and therefore the region of darkness, is symbolic of the region from where danger ever comes.

They shall remove ... Translate it (as in ²⁴⁹⁰Jeremiah 9:10): “from man even to cattle they are fled, they are gone.”

Jeremiah 50:4. The fall of Babylon is to be immediately followed by the return of the exiles homewards, in tearful procession, because they go as penitents; and yet with joy, because their faces are toward Zion. The cessation moreover of the schism between Israel and Judah is one of the signs of the times of the Messiah (²³¹¹²Isaiah 11:12,13), and symbolically represents the gathering together of the warring empires of the world under the peaceful scepter of the Church’s King.

Going and weeping: they shall go Omit the colon; i.e., “they go ever onward weeping.”

Jeremiah 50:5. *Thitherward* Hereward; the writer evidently was at Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 50:6. *Their shepherds ... mountains* Some translate it: Their shepherds, i.e., civil rulers (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 2:8 note) “have led them astray upon the seducing mountains.” — the mountains being the usual places where idolatry was practiced.

Their restingplace Their fold (³⁹²¹Psalms 23:2).

Jeremiah 50:7. *Offend not* i.e., “are not guilty.” Israel having left the fold, has no owner, and may therefore be maltreated with impunity.

Habitation of justice In ^{<3823>}Jeremiah 31:23 applied to Jerusalem: here, Yahweh alone is the true pasturage, in whom His people will find safety, rest, and plenty.

^{<3818>}**Jeremiah 50:8.** So firmly did the Jews settle themselves in Babylon under Jeremiah's counsels, that they were the last to abandon the place.

He goats See ^{<3449>}Isaiah 14:9 note.

^{<3819>}**Jeremiah 50:9.** *I will raise* Or, stir up.

An assembly of great nations The Medo-Persian empire was as much an aggregate of discordant nations as that of Babylon.

From thence From the north, i.e., by the great nations coming thence.

Return in vain A proverbial expression for ill success (compare ^{<2511>}Isaiah 55:11). Here the skillful warrior returns not empty.

^{<3810>}**Jeremiah 50:10,11.** Or, "Chaldaeae shall become a spoil ... for thou wast glad, thou exultedst, ye plunderers of mine heritage."

Because ye are grown fat Rather, for thou leapedst, skippedst as an animal does when playing.

As the heifer at grass Or, as a heifer threshing. When threshing cattle were allowed to eat their fill (^{<1574>}Deuteronomy 25:4), and so grew playful.

Bellow as bulls Better as in the margin.

^{<3812>}**Jeremiah 50:12.** *Your mother* i.e., Babylon. Confounded ... ashamed. Or, ashamed ... blush.

Behold ... Translate, "Behold she is the hindermost of the nations, a desert, a thirsty land, and a waste:" — the reason why Babylon is to blush. Once the head of gold (^{<2723>}Daniel 2:32), she is now the lowest of earthly powers.

^{<3814>}**Jeremiah 50:14.** place the colon after bow.

^{<3815>}**Jeremiah 50:15.** *Shout* i.e., spoken of the war-cry. So in ^{<2323>}Isaiah 42:13, where God is compared to a warrior, it is said He shall shout (the King James Version cry), i.e., raise the war-cry.

Site hath given her hand The sign of submission (compare ^{<1324>}1 Chronicles 29:24 margin).

Foundations Or, buttresses. The Septuagint: “battlements.”

²⁸¹⁶**Jeremiah 50:16.** The population is to be destroyed so utterly that the rich fields of Babylonia are to remain untilled.

They shall turn The full force of the words will be seen if it be remembered that it had been the policy of Nebuchadnezzar to compel citizens selected from the vanquished nations to settle in Babylonia.

²⁸¹⁷**Jeremiah 50:17.** *Israel is a scattered sheep* i.e., is like a flock which has been scared and driven in all directions, for lions have chased him.

First the king ... Rather, the first lion “ate him, even the king of Assyria; and this one, the last, heath picked his bones, even Nebuchadnezzar etc.” The constant wasting of the land by the Assyrians had so lessened the number of Israel, that Nebuchadnezzar had but the bones to pick.

²⁸¹⁸**Jeremiah 50:19.** Or, “I will bring Israel (the scared sheep) back to his pasturage (see ²⁸¹⁷Jeremiah 50:7) and he shall graze etc.” The places named are the districts of Palestine most famous for their rich herbage.

²⁸¹⁹**Jeremiah 50:20.** *Those days* The days of the Messiah.

Reserve Or, permit to remain: hence, the remnant, a word pregnant with meaning in the language of the prophets. See ²⁸¹⁸Isaiah 8:18 note (2).

²⁸²⁰**Jeremiah 50:21.** *The land of Merathaim* of double rebellion. Like Mitsraim, i.e., the two Egypts, Aram-Naharaim, i.e., Syria of the two rivers, or Mesopotamia, it is a dual. It may have been a real name; or — the dual ending being intensive — it may mean the land of very great rebelliousness.

Pekod Possibly a Babylonian town.

Waste Rather, slay, ²⁸²¹Jeremiah 50:27.

²⁸²²**Jeremiah 50:23.** *The hammer* Babylon, by whose instrumentality Yahweh had crushed the nations, is now cut asunder, i.e., the head of iron or bronze is cut away from the wooden handle, and broken.

²⁸²³**Jeremiah 50:24.** *I have laid a snare for thee* Babylon, the impregnable, was taken (according to Herodotus) by Cyrus by stratagem.

Having diverted the waters of the Euphrates, he entered the city by the river channel: but see ^{<278>}Daniel 5:1 note.

And thou wast not aware Better literally, and thou didst not know it.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:25.** By a grand figure the prophet describes Yahweh arming Himself that in person He may execute justice upon the wicked city.

For this is the work Rather, for my Lord Yahweh of hosts hath a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:26.** *Against her* Or, to her, in order to plunder her. Her storehouses (literally granaries) are to burst open, the grain piled up in heaps, and finally they are to devote her to destruction, i.e., to burn her wealth with fire.

From the utmost border (Or, “from the first of you even to the last”).

Let nothing of her be left literally, let her have no remnant. Contrast ^{<285>}Jeremiah 5:10.

^{<287>}**Jeremiah 50:27.** *Her bullocks* Her strong youths.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:28.** *The voice of them ...* i.e., There is a sound of fugitives escaping from Babylonia. The Jews saw in the fall of Babylonia Yahweh’s vengeance for His temple.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:29.** Or, “Summon the archers to Babylon, even all who bend the bow: encamp against her etc.” In this portion of the prophecy the capture of Babylon is regarded as the punishment due to her for burning the temple (^{<285>}Jeremiah 50:28).

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:31.** Babylon is here called Pride, just as in ^{<282>}Jeremiah 50:21 she was called Double-rebellion.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:32.** *Him ... his ... him* Or, her.

^{<285>}**Jeremiah 50:33.** *Were oppressed* are “oppressed together: and all their captors have laid firm hold upon them: they have refused to let them go.” The restoration of Israel and Judah to their land is necessary. As Babylon will not let them go, it must be broken, and its empire destroyed.

²⁵⁷⁴**Jeremiah 50:34.** *Redeemer* i.e., *Goel*²¹³⁵⁰. Yahweh is Israel's next relative, bound by law to avenge him, as well as to ransom him from captivity. It was the Go'el's duty also to plead his kinsman's cause. How thoroughly Yahweh will execute this duty for Israel is shown in the Hebrew by the triple repetition of the same word; literally "in pleading He will plead their plea."

The land ... Rather, "the earth." Babylon has hitherto by its ambition kept the world in unrest: now by its fall men everywhere can dwell in security.

²⁵⁷⁵**Jeremiah 50:35.** Omit "is." A summons comes from Yahweh, Israel's Goel, to the sword to fall upon all the elements of Babylon's greatness. The princes were her rulers at home and her generals in war. The wise men were those upon whose learning she so prided herself (²⁷⁰⁴Daniel 1:4 note).

²⁵⁷⁶**Jeremiah 50:36.** *Liars* Soothsayers, fortune-tellers.

²⁵⁷⁷**Jeremiah 50:37.** *The mingled people* i.e., the foreigners serving as mercenaries in her army.

²⁵⁷⁸**Jeremiah 50:38.** *A drought* Rather, "a sword," i.e., military skill and forethought.

They are mad upon their idols Omit their. The word for idols, literally terrors (²⁸⁸⁶Psalms 88:16) is used in this one place only of objects of worship. Probably it refers to those monstrous forms invented as representations of their deities.

²⁵⁷⁹**Jeremiah 50:39.** *Wild beasts of the islands* Jackals.

Owls Ostriches (marginal reference note).

²⁵⁸⁰**Jeremiah 50:41-43.** An application to Babylon of the doom against Jerusalem (²¹⁶²Jeremiah 6:22-24).

²⁵⁸¹**Jeremiah 50:41.** *The coasts of the earth* See the ²¹⁶²Jeremiah 6:22 note.

²⁵⁸⁴**Jeremiah 50:44-46.** A similar application to Babylon of what was said of Edom (marginal reference).

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 51

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:1.** *In the midst of them that rise up against me* Or, in Leb-kamai, the cipher for Kasdim, i.e., Chaldea. This cipher was not necessarily invented by Jeremiah, or used for concealment. It was probably first devised either for political purposes or for trade, and was in time largely employed in the correspondence between the exiles at Babylon and their friends at home. Thus, words in common use like Sheshach (²⁵²⁵Jeremiah 25:26) and Leb-kamai, would be known to everybody.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:2.** *Farmers* Or, winnowers.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:3.** The man who bends the bow, and the heavy-armed soldier who vaunts himself in his coat of mail (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 46:4 note), represent the Babylonians who defend the city.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:4.** Translate it: “And they,” i.e., the young men who form her host (²⁵¹⁰Jeremiah 51:3), “shall fall slain in the land of the Chaldeans, and pierced through in her streets,” i.e., the streets of Babylon.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:7.** Literally, “A golden cup is Babel in the hand of Yahweh, intoxicating the whole earth.” Jeremiah beholds her in her splendor, but the wine whereof she makes the nations drink is the wrath of God. As God’s hammer (²⁵¹³Jeremiah 50:23), Babylon was strong: as His cup of gold, she was rich and beautiful, but neither saves her from ruin.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:8.** *Destroyed* literally, broken, as was the hammer (²⁵¹³Jeremiah 50:23). The cup, though of metal, is thrown down so violently as to be shattered by the fall.

Howl for her The persons addressed are the many inhabitants of Babylon who were dragged from their homes to people its void places, and especially the Israelites. They have dwelt there long enough to feel pity for her, when they contrast her past magnificence with her terrible fall. Compare ²⁵⁰⁷Jeremiah 29:7.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:9.** Omit would. All was done that it was possible to do to heal her.

To the skies Or, to the clouds.

²⁵¹⁰**Jeremiah 51:10.** Yahweh hath brought to the light those things which prove us to be righteous: i.e., by punishing Babylon He hath justified

²⁵¹¹**Jeremiah 51:11.** *Make bright* Rather, Sharpen.

The Medes (⁴¹⁰²Genesis 10:2) were a branch of the great Aryan family, who as conquerors had seized upon the vast regions extending from the Caspian Sea to the eastern borders of Mesopotamia, but without being able to dispossess the Turanian tribes who had previously dwelt there. They were divided into numerous clans, each with its own local chief, the leaders of the larger sections being those who are here called kings.

²⁵¹²**Jeremiah 51:12.** *Upon the walls of Babylon* Or, “against the walls.”

The King James Version takes the word ironically, as a summons to Babylon to prepare for her defense; others take it as a summons to the army to make the attack.

²⁵¹³**Jeremiah 51:13.** *Upon many waters* The great wealth of Babylonia was caused not merely by the Euphrates, but by a vast system of canals, which served for defense as well as for irrigation.

The measure of thy covetousness i.e., the appointed end of thy gain. Some render it: the ell of thy cutting off, i.e., the appointed measure at which thou art to be cut off, at which thy web of existence is to be severed from the loom.

²⁵¹⁴**Jeremiah 51:14.** Rather, “Surely I have filled thee with men as with locusts, and they shall sing over thee the vintage-song.” The vintage-shout suggests the idea of trampling Babylon under foot, as the vintagers trample the grapes; a metaphor of the divine wrath.

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 51:15-19.** A transcript of ²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 10:12-16.

²⁵¹⁷**Jeremiah 51:20.** Or, Thou art my maul, weapons of war etc. The maul or mace (²⁵¹⁸Proverbs 25:18) only differs from the hammer (²⁴¹²Jeremiah 50:23) in being used for warlike purposes.

Omit the “will” in “will I break.” The crushing of the nations was going on at the time when the prophet wrote. Most commentators consider that Babylon was the mace of God.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:23.** *Captains ... rulers* (^{<2512>}Jeremiah 51:28). Pashas and Sagens. The prophet dwells at length upon Babylon's destructiveness.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:25.** *O destroying mountain* A volcano which by its flames and hot lava-streams "destroys the whole land."

A burnt mountain A burned-out mountain, of which the crater alone remains. Such was Babylon. Its destructive energy under Nebuchadnezzar was like the first outbreak of volcanic fires; its rapid collapse under his successors was as the same volcano when its flames have burned out, and its crater is falling in upon itself.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:26.** The prophet means that:

- (1) Babylon would never again be the seat of empire. Nor
- (2) would any new development of events take its rise thence.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:27.** Ararat, see the ^{<01004>}Genesis 8:4 note. Minni, probably the western portion of Armenia, as Ararat was that in the center and to the east. Armenia was at this time subject to Media. Ashchenaz was between the Euxine and the Caspian Seas.

A captain Some prefer the Septuagint rendering in ^{<34217>}Nahum 3:17: "a mingled mass of people." (Others, a "scribe," an Assyrian term.)

The rough caterpillars i.e., locusts in their third stage, when their wings are still enveloped in rough horny cases, which stick up upon their backs. It is in this stage that they are so destructive.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:28.** *His dominion* This belonged not to the subordinate rulers, but to the chief, e.g., to Cyrus.

^{<2512>}**Jeremiah 51:29.** The literal translation is:

Then the earth quaked and writhed;
For the thoughts of Yahweh
against Babel have stood fast;
To make Babel a waste without
inhabitant.

^{<2511>}**Jeremiah 51:30.** *Have forborn to fight* Or, have ceased to fight: in despair when they saw that the conflict was hopeless.

Holds The word properly means an acropolis, and so any inaccessible place of refuge.

They have burned i.e., the enemy have burned.

Bars i.e., fortifications (compare Amos 1:5).

Jeremiah 51:31. The royal palace was a strong fortification in the heart of the city. The messengers thus met one another.

At one end Rather, from all sides, entirely, completely.

Jeremiah 51:32. *The passages are stopped* The ferries are seized, occupied. The historians state that when Cyrus captured the city his troops moved down the bed of the river and occupied all these ferries, finding at each of them the gates negligently left open. See the **Daniel 5:1** note.

The reeds literally, the marshes or pools, which formed an important part of the defenses of Babylon, were dried up as completely as a piece of wood would be consumed by fire.

Jeremiah 51:33. Translate, “The daughter of Babylon is as a threshing-floor at the time when it is trampled,” i.e., trodden hard in readiness for the threshing: “yet a little while and the harvest-time” shall come to her, i.e., overtake her. In the East, the grain when reaped is carried at once to the threshing-floor, a level spot carefully prepared beforehand, usually about 50 feet in diameter, and trampled hard. The grain after it has been beaten out by a sledge drawn over it by oxen is separated from the chaff and stored up in granaries.

Jeremiah 51:34,35. Literally, “Nebuchadrezzar ... hath devoured us, hath crushed us, he hath set as aside as an empty vessel, he hath swallowed as like a crocodile, he hath filled his maw with my delicacies (**Genesis 49:20**), he hath cast us out. My wrong and my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitress of Zion say: and my blood be etc.” Nebuchadnezzar had devoured Jerusalem, had treated her as ruthlessly as a crocodile does its prey, and for this cruelty he and Babylon are justly to be punished.

Jeremiah 51:36. *Her sea* Probably the great lake dug by Nitocris to receive the waters of the Euphrates.

Her springs Her reservoir; the whole system of canals dug (²⁵¹³Jeremiah 51:13). The wealth of Babylonia depended upon irrigation.

²⁵¹³**Jeremiah 51:37.** *Heaps* Of rubbish, formed in this case by the decay of the unburned bricks of which Babylon was built. It is these heaps which have yielded such a large wealth of historical documents in our own days.

Dragons Jackals (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 10:22).

²⁵¹³**Jeremiah 51:38.** *Yell* Or, growl.

²⁵¹³**Jeremiah 51:39.** *In their heat ...* While, like so many young lions, they are in the full glow of excitement over their prey, God prepares for them a drinking-bout to end in the sleep of death. Compare ²⁷⁰¹Daniel 5:1.

²⁵⁴⁰**Jeremiah 51:40.** *Lambs ... rams ... he goats* i.e., all classes of the population (see ²³⁴⁶Isaiah 34:6 note).

²⁵⁴⁰**Jeremiah 51:41.** *Sheshach* Babylon: see the ²⁵⁰⁰Jeremiah 51:1 note.

Surprised i.e., seized, captured.

²⁵⁴²**Jeremiah 51:42.** By a grand metaphor the invading army is compared to the sea.

²⁵⁴³**Jeremiah 51:43.** *A wilderness* Or, a desert of sand.

A land wherein Rather, “a land — no man shall dwell in them (i.e., its cities), and no human being shall pass through them.”

²⁵⁴⁴**Jeremiah 51:44.** The sacred vessels plundered from Jerusalem, and laid up in the very temple of Bel, should be restored; the men and women dragged from other lands to people the city, released; and its wall falling would show the insignificance to which it should be reduced.

²⁵⁴⁵**Jeremiah 51:45.** *The fierce anger of the LORD* i.e., against Babylon. The people of God are to flee away that they may not be involved in the miseries of Babylon. See the ²⁵⁰⁸Jeremiah 50:8 note.

²⁵⁴⁶**Jeremiah 51:46.** Literally, “And beware lest your heart faint, and ye be afraid because of the rumour that is heard in the land: for in one year shall one rumour come, and afterward in another year another rumour; and violence shall be in the land etc.” The fall of Babylon was to be preceded

by a state of unquiet, men's minds being unsettled partly by rumors of the warlike preparations of the Medes, and of actual invasions: partly by intestine feuds. So before the conquest of Jerusalem by the Romans the Church had similar warnings (⁴²¹⁶Matthew 24:6,7).

²⁵¹⁴**Jeremiah 51:47.** *Therefore* The exiles were to note these things as signs of the approach of God's visitation.

Confounded Or, ashamed.

²⁵¹⁴**Jeremiah 51:49.** Render, "As Babylon caused the slain of Israel to fall, so because of Babylon, have fallen the slain of (or, in) the whole earth." Babylon has to answer for the general carnage caused by its wars.

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 51:50.** *Afar off* Or, from afar, from Chaldaea, far away from Yahweh's dwelling in Jerusalem. The verse is a renewed entreaty to the Jews to leave Babylon and journey homewards, as soon as Cyrus grants them permission.

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 51:51.** *Confounded* Or, ashamed. The verse is a statement of the wrong done to the exiles by Babylon, and so leads naturally to Babylon's punishment (²⁵¹⁵Jeremiah 51:52).

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 51:54.** *A cry* i.e., the war-cry.

²⁵¹⁵**Jeremiah 51:55.** Render, "For Yahweh wasteth Babylon, and will make to cease from her the loud noise (of busy life); and their wares (the surging masses of the enemy) roar like many waters: the noise of their shouting is given forth, i.e., resounds."

²⁵¹⁶**Jeremiah 51:56.** *Every one ...* Or, "Their bows are broken, for Yahweh is a God of recompenses; He will certainly requite."

²⁵¹⁶**Jeremiah 51:58.** *The broad walls* Herodotus makes the breadth of the walls 85 English feet.

Broken See the margin. i.e., the ground beneath them shall be laid bare by their demolition.

The people Or, peoples. Jeremiah concludes his prophecy with a quotation from Habakkuk; applying the words to the stupendous works intended to

make Babylon an eternal city, but which were to end in such early and utter disappointment.

^{<3515>}**Jeremiah 51:59-64.** Historical appendix. In his fourth year Zedekiah journeyed to Babylon either to obtain some favor from Nebuchadnezzar, or because he was summoned to be present on some state occasion. Jeremiah took the opportunity of sending to the exiles at Babylon this prophecy.

^{<3515>}**Jeremiah 51:59.** *Seraiah* Brother to Baruch.

A quiet prince literally, “prince of the resting place, i.e., quartermaster.” It was his business to ride forward each day, and select the place where the king would halt and pass the night.

^{<3516>}**Jeremiah 51:60.** *In a book* literally, in one book, on one scroll of parchment.

^{<3516>}**Jeremiah 51:61.** *And shalt see, and shalt read* Or, then see that thou read etc.

^{<3516>}**Jeremiah 51:62-64.** The sinking of the scroll was not for the purpose of destroying it, but was a symbolic act (compare the marginal reference); and the binding of a stone to it signified the certainty of the hasty ruin of the city.

^{<3516>}**Jeremiah 51:64.** *Thus far ...* Whoever added Jeremiah 52, evidently felt it his duty to point out that it was not written by Jeremiah.

NOTES ON JEREMIAH 52

Jeremiah 52 is an historical appendix to the Book of Jeremiah, giving details of the capture of Babylon additional to those contained in Jeremiah 39: The last words of the foregoing chapter affirm that Jeremiah was not the author, and the view adopted by most commentators is, that this chapter is taken from the 2nd Book of Kings, but that the person who added it here had access to other valuable documents, and made several modifications in it, the principal being the substitution of the account of those led captive by Nebuchadnezzar (²⁴²²⁸Jeremiah 52:28-30), for the narrative given in ¹²⁵²²2 Kings 25:22-26, where see the notes.

²⁴⁵¹³**Jeremiah 52:3.** *It* i.e., Zedekiah's evil doing.

presence, that Zedekiah Or, punctuate; "presence. And Zedekiah" etc.

²⁴⁵¹⁷**Jeremiah 52:7.** *Broken up ... the plain* Or, "broken into ... the Arabah" (²⁴⁰⁰¹Deuteronomy 1:1).

²⁴⁵¹⁹**Jeremiah 52:11.** *Put him in prison ...* Not found in 2 Kings, for in the contemporaneous history what befell Zedekiah at Riblah would alone be known. It was no doubt added by the same hand which inserted the account of the deportations to Babylon.

²⁴⁵²²**Jeremiah 52:12.** *Served* The word implies high office.

²⁴⁵²³**Jeremiah 52:13.** *Houses of the great* Rather, every great house; i.e., the larger houses only.

²⁴⁵²⁵**Jeremiah 52:15.** *Certain of the poor of the people, and* Omit (as in ¹²⁵¹¹2 Kings 25:11), being inserted through some confusion with ²⁴⁵²⁶Jeremiah 52:16.

Multitude Possibly workmen. The object of Nebuchadnezzar was to people Babylon, not with paupers, but with men of a better class, artisans and workmen, who would enrich it.

²⁴⁵²⁶**Jeremiah 52:16.** *Husbandmen* Men who tilled little plots of ground with the mattock.

²⁵²¹**Jeremiah 52:20.** *twelve brasen bulls that were under* Omitted in 2 Kings and in ²⁴⁷⁹Jeremiah 27:19. Probably rightly, for what is said here of their being under the bases is a mistake. The bases were under the ten lavers. The Septuagint makes sense by translating it: “the twelve brasen bulls under the sea.”

²⁵²¹**Jeremiah 52:21.** The fillet means a measuring line; the pillars were 12 cubits, i.e., 18 feet, in circumference, and thus the diameter would be 5 feet 9 inches. As the brass was four fingers, i.e., scarcely four inches thick, the hollow center would be more than five feet in diameter.

²⁵²³**Jeremiah 52:23.** *On a side* The 96 were toward the four winds, 24 toward the north, 24 toward the east, and so on. Add one at each corner, and the whole 100 is made up.

²⁵²⁵**Jeremiah 52:25.** *An eunuch ... men of war* Or, who had charge of men of war. The King James Version makes him commander-in-chief; he was second in command, i.e., a lieutenant, possibly one among many others of equal rank.

²⁵²⁸**Jeremiah 52:28.** *Seventh year* The suggestion is now generally received, that the word ten has dropped out before seven, and that the deportations mentioned here are all connected with the final war against Zedekiah. The calculation of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign is different from that used elsewhere, showing that the writer had access to a document not known to the compiler of the Book of Kings. In each date there is a difference of one year. The Septuagint omits ²⁵²⁸Jeremiah 52:28-30.

The number of the exiles carried away is small compared with the 42,360 men who returned (¹⁵¹⁶Ezra 2:64,65), leaving a large Jewish population behind at Babylon. But a continual drain of people from Judaea was going on, and the 10,000 carried away with Jehoiachin formed the nucleus and center, and gave tone to the whole (see ¹²⁴⁴2 Kings 24:14). When they began to thrive in Babylon, large numbers would emigrate there of their own accord.

A comparison of this chapter with the parallel portion of 2 Kings shows that though not free from clerical errors and mistakes of copyists the body of the text is remarkably sound. Many of the differences between the two texts are abbreviations made purposely by the compiler of the Book of Kings; others are the result of negligence; and upon the whole the text of

the Book of Kings is inferior to that of the Appendix to the Book of Jeremiah. Bearing in mind, however, that possibly they are not two transcripts of the same text, but the result of an independent use by two different writers of the same original authority, their complete agreement, except in trivial matters and mistakes easy of correction, is a satisfactory proof of the general trust-worthiness of the Masoretic Text in all more important particulars.