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Barnes' Notes on the Bible
Volume 10 -
Amos
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To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPHET AMOS

Theodoret: “He who made, one by one, the hearts of men, and understands all their works, knowing the hardness and contrariness of the heart of Israel, reasons with them not through one prophet only, but, employing as His ministers many prophets and wondrous men, admonishes them and foretells the things to come, evidencing through the harmony of many the truthfulness of their predictions.”

As the contradiction of false teachers gave occasion to Paul to speak of himself, so the persecution of the priest of Bethel has brought out such knowledge as we have of the life of Amos, before God called him to be a prophet. “I,” he says, “was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son” (^{<3074>}Amos 7:14). He had not received any of the training in those schools of the prophets which had been founded by Samuel, and through which, amid the general apostasy and corruption, both religious knowledge and religious life were maintained in the remnant of Israel. He was a “herdsman,” whether (as this word, ^{rqB}^{<ch1241>}, would naturally mean being used always of the “ox” or “herd” in contrast with the “flocks” of sheep or goats, and the name being derived from “plowing”) “a cowherd” or (less obviously) “a shepherd.” He was “among the herdsmen of Tekoah”; among them, and, outwardly, as they, in nothing distinguished from them.

The sheep which he tended (because he also kept sheep) may have been his own. There is nothing to prove or to disprove it. Anyhow, he was not like the king of Moab, “a sheep-master” (The term ^{rqB}^{<ns349>} is used of the king of Moab, ^{<1201>}2 Kings 3:4), as the Jews, following out their principle, that “prophecy was only bestowed by God upon the rich and noble” (see the note at ^{<3073>}Joel 2:29), wish to make him. Like David, he was following the sheep (^{<3075>}Amos 7:15. He took me ^{rj 1a1}^{<h310>} ^{~aB}^{<h6629>};) as their shepherd. But his employment as “a gatherer” (or, more probably, “a cultivator”) “of sycamore fruit” designates him instead as one living by a rural employment for hire. Probably, the word designates the artificial means by which the sycamore fruit was ripened, irritating, scraping, puncturing, wounding it.^{f119} Amos does not say that these were his food, but that one of his jobs was to perform a gardener’s function in maturing the figs. So he was something of a gardener and a shepherd among other shepherds. The sheep which he fed were also probably a matter of trade.

The breed of sheep and goats, in keeping with his special name of shepherd **רִקְעוֹ**⁽¹³⁴⁹⁾, was derived, is still known by the same name in Arabia; a race, small, thin, short-legged, ugly, and stunted. It furnished a proverb, “viler than a naqad”; yet the wool of the sheep was accounted the very best. The goats were found especially in Bahrein. Among the Arabs also, the shepherd of these sheep was known by a name derived from them. They were called “naqad;” and their shepherd was called a “noqad”.^{f120}

The prophet’s birthplace, Tekoah, was a town which, in the time of Josephus and of Jerome, had dwindled into a “village” (Josephus Vit. Section 75), “a little village” (Jerome on ⁽²⁴⁰⁾Jeremiah 6:1), on a high hill, twelve miles from Jerusalem, “which,” Jerome adds, “we see daily.” “It lay” Jerome says (Praef. ad. Amos), “six miles southward from holy Bethlehem where the Saviour of the world was born, and beyond it is no village except some rude huts and movable tents. Such is the wide waste of the desert which stretches to the Red Sea, and the bounds of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Indians. And no grain whatever being grown upon this dry and sandy soil, it is all full of shepherds, in order, by the multitude of the flocks, to make amends for the barrenness of the land.” From Tekoah Joab brought the “wise woman” (⁽⁹⁴⁾1 Samuel 14:2) to intercede for Absalom; Rehoboam built it (⁽⁴¹⁶⁾2 Chronicles 11:6); i.e., whereas it had been before (what it afterward again became) a village, and so was not mentioned in the Book of Joshua, he made it a fortified town toward his southeastern border. The neighboring wilderness was called after it (⁽⁴¹⁶⁾2 Chronicles 20:20; 1 Macc. 9:33). Besides its sycamores, its oil was the best in Judah (Menachot viii. 3. in Reland p. 1029). War and desolation have extirpated both from this as well as from other parts of Palestine (See Keith’s Land of Israel c. 3, 4, 5.; Stanley’s Palestine p. 120. Robinson i. 552).

Its present remains are Christian (Robinson i. 486), “ruins of 4 or 5 acres.” It, as well as so many other places near the Dead Sea, is identified by the old name, slightly varied in pronunciation, Theku’a, as also by its distance from Jerusalem (Ritter Erdk. xv. p. 629). In the sixth century A.D. we hear of a chapel in memory of the holy Amos at Tekoa (Vita Sabae in Cotelre. Ecc. Graec. Mon. iii. p. 272), where the separated monks of the lesser laura of Saba communicated on the Lord’s day. The wide prospect from Tekoa embraced both the dead and the living — God’s mercies and His judgments.

To the Southeast (Robinson, *Ibid.*) “the view is bounded only by the level mountains of Moab, with frequent bursts of the Dead Sea, seen through openings among the rugged and desolate mountains which intervene.” On the North, the Mount of Olives is visible, at that time dear to sight, as overhanging the place, which God had “chosen to place His Name there.” Tekoah, however, although the birthplace, was not the home of the prophet. He was “among the herdsmen from Tekoah” [1WQT]^{h8620} their employment, as shepherds, leading them away “from Tekoah.” In the wilds of the desert while he was following his sheep, God saw him and revealed Himself to him, as he had to Jacob and to Moses, and said to him, “Go prophesy unto My people Israel.” And, just as the apostles left their nets and their father, and Matthew abandoned the receipt of custom, and followed Jesus, so Amos left his sheep and his cultivation of sycamores, and appeared suddenly in his shepherd’s dress at the royal but idolatrous (^{<3073>}Amos 7:13) sanctuary, the temple of the state, to denounce the idolatry sanctioned by the state, to foretell the extinction of the Royal family, and the captivity of the people. This, like Hosea, he had to do in the reign of the mightiest of the sovereigns of Israel, in the midst of her unclouded prosperity. Bethel was only twelve miles north of Jerusalem (Eusebius, *sub. v.*), since Tekoah was twelve miles toward the southeast. Six or seven hours would suffice to transport the shepherd from his sheep and the wilderness to that fountain of Israel’s corruption, the high places of Bethel, and for the inspired peasant to confront the priests and the prophets of the state-idolatry.

There doubtless he said, “the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste” (^{<3079>}Amos 7:9); and there, like the former “man of God,” while standing opposite “the altar,” he renewed the prophecy against it, and prophesied that in its destruction it should involve its idolatrous worshipers (^{<3080>}Amos 9:1). Yet although he did deliver a part of his prophecy at Bethel, still, like his great predecessors Elijah and Elisha, doubtless he did not confine his ministry there. His summons to the luxurious ladies of Samaria, whose expenses were supported by the oppressions of the poor (^{<3080>}Amos 4:1), was without question delivered in Samaria itself. The call to the pagan to look down into Samaria from the heights which girt in the valley out of which it rose (see the notes at ^{<3089>}Amos 3:9), thence to behold its din and its oppressions, to listen to the sound of its revelries and the wailings of its oppressed, and so to judge between God and His people, would also be most effectively given within Samaria. The consciences of the guilty

inhabitants to whom he preached would populate the heights around them, their wall of safety, as they deemed, between them and the world, with pagan witnesses of their sins, and pagan avengers. The prophet could only know the coming destruction of the house of Jeroboam and the captivity of Israel by inspiration. The sins which he rebuked, he probably knew from being among them. As Paul's "spirit was stirred in him" at Athens, "when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry" (^{<34716>}Acts 17:16), so the spirit of Amos must have been stirred to its depths by that grievous contrast of luxury and penury side by side, which he describes in such vividness of detail. The sins which he rebukes are those of the outward prosperity especially of a capital, the extreme luxury (^{<3182>}Amos 3:12,15; 4:1; 5:11; 6:4-6), revelries (^{<3183>}Amos 2:8; 3:9), debauchery (^{<3184>}Amos 2:7), of the rich, who supported their own reckless expenditure by oppression of the poor (^{<3185>}Amos 2:7,8; 3:9; 4:1; 5:11; 6:3; 8:4-6), extortion (^{<3186>}Amos 3:10), hard bargains with their necessities (^{<3187>}Amos 2:8), perversion of justice (^{<3188>}Amos 2:7; 5:7,12), with bribing, (^{<3189>}Amos 2:6; 5:12), false measures (^{<3190>}Amos 8:5), a griping, hard-fisted, and probably usurious sale of grain (^{<3191>}Amos 8:5,6). In grappling with sin, Amos deals more with the details and circumstances of it than Hosea. Hosea touches the center of the offence; Amos shows the hideousness of it in the details into which it branches out. As he is everywhere graphic, so here he points out the events of daily life in which the sin showed itself, as the vile price or, it may be, the article of luxury, "the pair of sandals" (^{<3192>}Amos 2:6; 8:6), for which the poor was sold, or the "refuse of wheat" (he coins the term) which they sold, at high prices and with short measure to the poor (^{<3193>}Amos 8:6).

According to the title which Amos prefixes to his prophecy, his office fell within the 25 years, during which Uzziah and Jeroboam II were contemporaries (809-784 B.C). This falls in with the opinion already expressed (See the introduction to Hosea) that the bloodshed mentioned by Hosea in the list of their sins, was instead political bloodshed in their revolutions after the death of Jeroboam II, than individual murder. For Amos, while upbraiding Israel for the sins incidental to political prosperity and wealth (such as was the time of Jeroboam II) does not mention bloodshed.

It has been thought that the mention of the earthquake, two years before which Amos began his prophecy, furnishes us with a more definite date. That earthquake must have been a terrible visitation, since it was remembered after the captivity, two and a half centuries afterward. "Ye

shall flee,” says Zechariah (~~3845~~ Zechariah 14:5), as of a thing which his hearers well knew by report, “as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.” Josephus connects the earthquake with Uzziah’s act of pride in offering the incense, for which God struck him with leprosy. He relates it as a fact (Antiquities ix. 10):

“Meanwhile a great earthquake shook the ground, and, the temple parting, a bright ray of the sun shone forth, and fell upon the king’s face, so that immediately the leprosy came over him. And before the city, at the place called Eroge, the Western half of the hill was broken off and rolled half a mile to the mountain Eastward, and there stayed, blocking up the ways and the king’s gardens.”

This account of Josephus, however, is altogether unhistorical. Not to argue from the improbability, that such an event as the rending of the temple itself should NOT have been mentioned, Josephus has confused Zechariah’s description of an event yet future with the past earthquake under Uzziah. Nor can the date be reconciled with the history. For when Uzziah was stricken with leprosy,

“Jotham, his son, was over the king’s house, judging the people of the land” (~~4452~~ 2 Chronicles 26:21).

But Jotham was only 25 years old at his father’s death, “when he himself began to reign” (~~4470~~ 2 Chronicles 27:1). And, Uzziah survived Jeroboam by 26 years. So Jotham, who judged for his father after his leprosy, was not born when Jeroboam died. Uzziah then must have been stricken with leprosy some years AFTER Jeroboam’s death; and consequently, AFTER the earthquake also, since Amos, who prophesied in the days of Jeroboam, prophesied “two years BEFORE the earthquake.”

An ancient Hebrew interpretation^{f121} of the prophecy of Isaiah,

“within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it is no more a people” (~~2308~~ Isaiah 7:8),

assumed that Isaiah was foretelling the commencement of the captivity under Tiglath-Pileser or Sargon, and since the period of Isaiah’s own prophecy to that captivity was not 65 years, supposed that Isaiah counted from a prophecy of Amos, “Israel shall surely be led captive out of his own land” (~~3071~~ Amos 7:11,17). They placed this prophecy of Amos in the 25th year of Uzziah. Then his remaining 27 years, Jotham’s 16 years, Ahaz’ 16

years, and the first 6 years of Hezekiah would have made up the 65 years. This calculation was not necessarily connected with the error as to the supposed connection of the earthquake and the leprosy of Uzziah. However, it is plain from the words of Isaiah, “in yet ~~לשלושים~~^{לשלושים} threescore and five years,” that he is dating from the time when he uttered the prophecy; and so the prophecy relates, not to the imperfect captivity which ended the “kingdom” of Israel, but to that more complete deportation under Esarhaddon (~~לשלושים~~ Ezra 4:2; ~~לשלושים~~ 2 Chronicles 33:11; ~~לשלושים~~ 2 Kings 17:24), when the ten tribes ceased to be “anymore a people” (Ahaz-14 years + Hezekiah-29 years + Manasseh-22 years = 65 years total). Neither then does this fix the date of Amos.

Nor does the comparison, which Amos bids Israel make between his own borders, and those of Calneh, Hamath and Gath, determine the date of the prophecy. Since Uzziah broke down the walls of Gath (~~לשלושים~~ 2 Chronicles 26:6), and Hamath was recovered by Jeroboam II to Israel (~~לשלושים~~ 2 Kings 14:28), it is probable that the point of comparison lay between the present disasters of these nations, and those with which Amos threatened Israel, and which the rich men of Israel practically did not believe. For it follows, “ye that put far away the evil day” (~~לשלושים~~ Amos 6:3). It is probable then that Calneh (the very ancient city (~~לשלושים~~ Genesis 10:10) which subsequently became Ctesiphon,) on the other side of the Euphrates, had lately suffered from Assyria, as Gath and Hamath from Judah and Israel. But we know none of these dates. Isaiah speaks of the Assyrian as boasting that “Calno” was “as Carchemish” (~~לשלושים~~ Isaiah 10:9), Hamath as Arpad, Samaria as Damascus.” But this relates to times long subsequent, when Hamath, Damascus, and Samaria, had fallen into the hands of Assyria. Our present knowledge of Assyrian history gives us no clue to the event, which was well known to those to whom Amos spoke.

Although, however, the precise time of the prophetic office of Amos cannot thus be fixed, it must have fallen WITHIN the reign of Jeroboam, to whom Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, accused him (~~לשלושים~~ Amos 7:10,11). For this whole prophecy implies that Israel was in a state of prosperity, ease, and security, whereas it fell to a state of anarchy immediately upon Jeroboam’s death. “The mention of the entering in of Hamath” (~~לשלושים~~ Amos 6:14) as belonging to Israel implies that this prophecy was after Jeroboam had recovered it to Israel (~~לשלושים~~ 2 Kings 14:25); and the ease, pride, luxury, which he upbraids, evince that the foreign oppressions (~~לשלושים~~ 2 Kings 14:26) had ceased for some time. This agrees with the title of the prophecy, but

does not limit it further. Since he prophesied while Uzziah and Jeroboam II reigned together, Amos' prophetic office must have fallen between 809 B.C. and 784 B.C. — in the last 25 years of the reign of Jeroboam II. His office, then, began probably after that of Hosea, and closed long before its close. He is, in a manner then, both later and earlier than Hosea, later than the earliest period of Hosea's prophetic office, and far earlier than the latest.

Within this period, there is nothing to limit the activity of Amos to a very short time. The message of Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, implies that Amos' words of woe had shaken Israel through and through.

“Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words” (^{<3070>}Amos 7:10).

It may be that God sent him to the midst of some great festival at Bethel, as, at Jeroboam's dedication-feast, He sent the prophet who afterward disobeyed Him, to foretell the desecration of the altar, which Jeroboam was consecrating, in God's Name, against God. In this case, Amos might, at once, like Elijah, have been confronted with a great concourse of the idol-worshippers. Yet the words of Amaziah seem, in their obvious meaning, to imply that Amos had had a more pervading influence than would be produced by the delivery of God's message in one place. He says of “the land,” that is, of all the ten tribes generally, it “is not able to bear all his words.” The accusation also of a “conspiracy” probably implies, that some had not been only shaken, but they had been converted by the words of Amos, and were known by their adherence to him and his belief.

Amos seems also to speak of the prohibition to God's prophets to prophesy, as something habitual, beyond the one opposition of Amaziah, which he rebuked on the spot.

“I raised up of your sons for prophets; but ye commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not” (^{<3021>}Amos 2:11,12).

Nor, strictly speaking, was Amos a son of Ephraim. The series of images in Amos 4 seem to be an answer to the objection as to why he prophesied among them. People, he would say, were not, in the things of nature, surprised that the effect followed the cause. God's command WAS the cause; Amos' prophesying was the effect (^{<3088>}Amos 3:3-8). “Then they put away from them the evil day” (^{<3068>}Amos 6:3), forgetting future evil in present luxury; or they professed that God was with them; “the Lord, the

God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken” (^{<3154>}Amos 5:14); or trusting in their half-service of God and His imagined presence among them, they jeered at Amos’ prophecies of ill, and professed to desire the Day of the Lord, with which he threatened them; they said that evil would not reach them;

“Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord! To what end is it to you?” (^{<3158>}Amos 5:18).

“All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us” (^{<3190>}Amos 9:10).

They showed also in deed that they hated those who publicly reproved them (^{<3150>}Amos 5:10); and Amos, like Hosea, declares that they are hardened, so that wisdom itself must leave them to themselves (^{<3153>}Amos 5:13). All this implies a continued contact between the prophet and the people, so that his function was not discharged in a few sermons, so to say, or inspired declarations of God’s purpose, but must have been that of a pastor among them over the course of several years. His present book (like Hosea’s book) is a SUMMARY of his prophecies.

That book (since Amos himself subsequently gathered his prophetic teaching into a whole) is one well-ordered whole. He himself (in the title) states that it had been spoken before it was written. For in that he says, these are “the words” which in prophetic vision he “saw, two years before the earthquake,” this portion of his prophecies must have preceded his writings by those two years at least. That terrible earthquake was probably the occasion of his collecting those prophecies. But that earthquake doubtless was no mere note of time. If he had intended only a date, he would probably have named (as other prophets do) the year of the king of Judah. He himself mentions earthquakes (^{<3191>}Amos 4:11), as one of the warnings of God’s displeasure. This more destructive earthquake was probably the first great token of God’s displeasure during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II, the first herald of those heavier judgments which Amos had predicted, and which broke upon Israel, wave after wave, until the last, carried him away captive. For two years, Israel had been forewarned; now “the beginning of sorrows” (^{<3193>}Matthew 24:8) had set in.

Amos, at the beginning of his book (as has been already noticed) joins on his book with the book of the prophet Joel. Joel had foretold, as instances of God’s judgments on sin, how He would recompense the wrong, which

Tyre, Zidon, Philistia and Edom had done to Judah, and that He would make Egypt desolate. Amos, omitting Egypt, adds Damascus, Amman and Moab, and Judah itself. It may be, that he selects seven nations in all, as a sort of whole (since that number is so often used), or that he includes all the special enemies of the theocracy, the nations who hated Israel and Judah, BECAUSE they were the people of God, and God's people itself, as far as it too was alienated from its God. Certainly, the sins denounced are sins against the theocracy or government of God. It may be, that Amos would exhibit to them the truth, that "God is no respecter of persons;" that He, the Judge of the whole earth, punishes every sinful nation; and that he would, by this declaration of God's judgments, prepare them for the truth, from which sinful man so shrinks; — that God punishes most, where He had most shown His light and love (^{<3092>}Amos 3:2). The thunder-cloud of God's judgments, having passed over all the nations round about, Syria and Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and even discharged the fire from heaven on Judah and Jerusalem, settles finally upon Israel. The summary which closes this circle of judgments on Israel, is fuller in regard to THEIR sins, since they were the chief objects of his mission. In that summary Amos gathers into one the sins with which he elsewhere upbraids them, and sets before them their ingratitude and their endeavors to extinguish the light which God gave them.

Our chapters follow a natural division, in that each (like those of Hosea) ends in woe. Amos 3, Amos 4, and Amos 5 are distinguished by the threefold summons — "Hear ye this word!" In each, he sets before them some of their sins, and in each he pronounces God's sentence upon them.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus" (^{<3091>}Amos 3:11; 4:12; 5:16, as before, ^{<3094>}Amos 2:14).

On this follows a twofold woe, "Woe unto you that desire" (^{<3098>}Amos 5:18); "Woe to them that are at ease" (^{<3099>}Amos 6:1); both which sections alike end in renewed sentences of God's judgment; the first, of the final captivity of Israel "beyond Damascus;" the second, of their nearer afflictions through the first invasion of Tiglath-pileser (see the note at ^{<3094>}Amos 6:14). In Amos 7 he begins a series of visions. In the first two visions, God forgives, at the intercession of the prophet (^{<3098>}Amos 7:3,6). In the third vision God interprets that He would no longer forgive (^{<3098>}Amos 7:8). Upon this followed the prohibition from Amaziah to

prophecy, and God's sentence against him. In Amos 8, Amos resumes (as though nothing had intervened), the series of visions, upon which Amaziah had broken in. He resumes them exactly where he had been stopped. Amaziah interrupted when Amos declared that God would not "pass by" the house of Israel "anymore," but would desolate the idol-sanctuaries of Israel and bring a sword against the house of Jeroboam. The vision (in which Amos resumes) renews the words, "I will not again pass by them anymore" (^{<30B>}Amos 8:2), and foretells that the songs of the idol-temple should be turned into howlings. Amos heads the last chapter with a vision, that not only should the idol-altar and temple be destroyed, but that it should be the destruction of its worshipers (^{<30B>}Amos 9:1). Amos makes each of these visions a theme which he expands, both ending in woe; the first, with the utter destruction of the idolaters of Israel (^{<30B4>}Amos 8:14); the second, with that of the sinful "kingdom" of Israel (^{<30B>}Amos 9:8). With this he unites the promise to the "house" of Israel, that, "sifted" as they would be "among the nations, not one grain would fall to the earth" (^{<30B>}Amos 9:9). To this he, like Hosea, adds a closing promise (the first in his whole book) that God would raise the fallen tabernacle of David, convert the pagan, and therewith restore the captivity of Israel, amid promises, which had already (in Joel) symbolized spiritual blessings (^{<30B>}Amos 9:13).

Amos, like Hosea, was a prophet for Israel. After the second chapter in which he includes Judah in the circle of God's visitations, because he had "despised the law of the Lord" (^{<30B>}Amos 2:4,5), Amos only notices him incidentally. He there foretells that Jerusalem should (as it was) be burned with fire. Judah also must be included in the words, "against the whole family which God brought up out of the land of Egypt" (^{<30B>}Amos 3:1), and "woe" is pronounced against those who are "at ease in Zion" (^{<30B1>}Amos 6:1). Elsewhere, "Israel," "the house of Israel," "the virgin of Israel," "the sanctuaries of Israel," "Jacob," "the house of Jacob," and (in the same sense) "the high places of Isaac," "the house of Isaac"; "the house of Joseph," "the remnant of Joseph," "the affliction of Joseph," "the mountain," or "the mountains of Samaria," "Samaria" itself, "Bethel" (^{<30B>}Amos 3:9,12,13,14; 4:1,4,5,12; 5:1,4,6,15,25; 6:1,6,8,14; 7:2,5,8,9,16,17; 8:2,14; 9:7,8,9), occur interchangeably as the object of his prophecy. Amaziah's taunt, that his words, as being directed against Israel and Bethel, would be acceptable in the kingdom of Judah, implies the same; and Amos himself declares that this was his commission, "go,

prophesy unto My people Israel.” In speaking of the idolatry of Beersheba, Amos uses the word, “pass not over to Beersheba” (~~308B~~ Amos 5:5), adding the idolatries of Judah to their own. The word, “pass not over,” could only be used by one prophesying in Israel. Therefore, it must have been the more impressive to the faithful in Israel, that Amos closed his prophecy by the promise, not to them primarily, but to the house of David, and to Israel through its restoration. Amos, like Hosea, foretells the utter destruction of “the kingdom of Israel,” even while pronouncing that God would not utterly destroy “the house of Jacob” (~~308B~~ Amos 9:8-10), but would save the elect within it.

The opposition of Amaziah stands out, as one signal instance of the manifold cry, “Prophesy not,” with which people to drown the Voice of God. Jeroboam left the complaint unheeded. His great victories had been foretold to him by the prophet Jonah; and he would not interfere with the prophet of God, although he predicted, not as Amaziah distorted his words, that “Jeroboam” should “die by the sword,” but that “the house of Jeroboam” (~~308B~~ Amos 7:9) would so perish. But his book is all comprised within the reign of Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel. He was called by God to be a prophet there; nor is there even the slightest trace of his having exercised his function in Judah, or having retired there in life.

A somewhat late tradition places Amos among the many prophets whom our Lord says His people killed. The tradition bore, “that after he (Amos) had been BEATEN often (the writer uses the same word^{f122} by Amaziah the priest of Bethel, the son of that priest, Osee, pierced his temples with a stake. He was carried half-dead to his own land, and, after some days, died of the wound, and was buried with his fathers.” But the anonymous Greek writer who relates it, (although it is in itself probable) has not, in other cases, trustworthy information, and Jerome and Cyril of Alexandria knew nothing of it. Jerome (de loc. Hebr. T. iii. 206. ed. Vall.) relates only that the tomb of Amos was still shown at Tekoa, his birthplace.

The influence of the shepherd-life of Amos appears most in the sublimest part of his prophecy, his descriptions of the mighty workings of Almighty God (~~304B~~ Amos 4:13; 5:8; 9:5,6). With those awful and sudden changes in nature, whereby what to the idolaters was an object of worship, was suddenly overcast, and “the day made dark with night,” his shepherd-life had made him familiar. The starry heavens had often witnessed the silent conversation of his soul with God. In the calf, the idolaters of Ephraim

worshiped “nature.” Amos then delights in exhibiting to them HIS God, whom they too believed that they worshiped, as the Creator of “nature,” wielding and changing it at His Will. All nature too should be obedient to its Maker in the punishment of the ungodly (<3000>Amos 8:8), nor should anything hide from Him (<3000>Amos 9:2,3,5). The shepherd-life would also make the prophet familiar with the perils from wild beasts which we know of as facts in David’s youth. The images drawn from them were probably reminiscences of what he had seen or encountered (<3000>Amos 3:4,5,12; 5:19). But Amos, a shepherd in a barren and for the most part treeless wild, lived not as a farmer. His was not a country of grain, nor of cedars and oaks; so that images from stately trees (<3000>Amos 2:9), a heavy-laden wain (<3000>Amos 2:13), or the sifting of corn (<3000>Amos 9:9), were not the direct results of his life amid sights of nature. The diseases of grain, locusts, drought, which, the prophet says, God had sent among them, were inflictions which would be felt in the grain-countries of Israel, rather than in the wilderness of Tekoah. The insensibility for which he upbraids Israel was, of course, their hardness of heart amid their own sufferings (<3000>Amos 4:7-9); the judgments, with which he threatens them in God’s Name (<3000>Amos 7:1-3), can have no bearing on his shepherd-life in his own land.

Even Jerome, while laying down a true principle, inadvertently gives as an instance of the images resulting from that shepherd-life, the opening words of his book, which are in part words of the prophet Joel.

“It is natural,” he says, “that all who exercise an art, should speak in terms of their art, and that each should bring likenesses from that wherein he hath spent his life. Why say this? In order to show, that Amos the prophet too, who was a shepherd among shepherds, and that, not in cultivated places, or amid vineyards, or woods, or green meadows, but in the wide waste of the desert, where were witnessed the fierceness of lions and the destruction of cattle, used the language of his art, and called the awful and terrible Voice of the Lord, the roaring of lions, and compared the overthrow of the cities of Israel to the lonely places of shepherds or the drought of mountains.”

The truth may be, that the religious life of Amos, amid scenes of nature, accustomed him, as well as David, to express his thoughts in words taken from the great picture-book of nature, which, as being also written by the Hand of God, so wonderfully expresses the things of God. When his

prophet's life brought him among other scenes of cultivated nature, his soul, so practiced in reading the relations of the physical to the moral world, took the language of his parables alike from what he saw, or from what he remembered. He was what we should call "a child of nature," endued with power and wisdom by his God. Still more mistaken has it been, to attribute to the prophet any inferiority even of outward style, in consequence of his shepherd-life. Even a pagan has said, "words readily follow thought;" much more, when thoughts and words are poured into the soul together by God the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, scarcely any prophet is more glowing in his style, or combines more wonderfully the natural and moral world, the Omnipotence and Omniscience of God (~~<304B>~~ Amos 4:13). Visions, if related, are most effectively related in prose. Their efficacy depends, in part, on their simplicity. Their meaning might be overlaid and hidden by ornament of words. Thus, much of the Book of Amos, then, is naturally in prose. The poetry, so to speak, of the visions of Amos or of Zechariah is in the thoughts, not in the words. Amos has also chosen the form of prose for his upbraidings of the wealthy sinners of Israel. Yet, in the midst of this, what more poetic than the summons to the pagan enemies of Israel, to populate the heights around Samaria, and behold its sins (~~<308B>~~ Amos 3:9)? What is more graphic than that picture of utter despair which did not dare to name the Name of God (~~<308B>~~ Amos 6:9,10)? What is bolder than the summons to Israel to come, if they desired, at once to sin and to atone for their sin (~~<300B>~~ Amos 4:4)? What is more striking in power than the sudden turn, "You only have I known. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (~~<308B>~~ Amos 3:2)? Or the sudden summons "because I will do this unto thee" (~~<3042>~~ Amos 4:12) (the silence (what the "this" is) is more thrilling than words) "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel?" Or what is more pathetic than the close of the picture of the luxurious rich, when, having said, how they heaped luxuries one upon another, he ends with what they did NOT do; "they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph" (~~<308B>~~ Amos 6:6)?

Augustine selects Amos, as an instance of unadorned eloquence. Having given instances from Paul, he says (De Doctr. Christ. iv. 7. n. 15-21), "These things, when they are taught by professors, are accounted great, bought at a great price, sold amid great boasting. I fear these discussions of mine may savor of the like boasting. But I have to do with men of a spurious learning, who think meanly of our writers, not because they have

not, but because they make no show of the eloquence which these prize too highly.

“I see that I must say something of the eloquence of the prophets. And this I will do, chiefly out of the book of that prophet, who says that he was a shepherd or a cowherd, and was taken thence by God and sent to prophesy to His people.

“When then this peasant, or peasant-prophet, reproveth the ungodly, proud, luxurious, and therefore most careless of brotherly love, he cries aloud, “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, etc.” Would they who, as being learned and eloquent, despise our prophets as unlearned and ignorant of elocution, had they had aught of this sort to say, or had they to speak against such, would they, as many of them as would fain not be senseless, wish to speak otherwise? For what would any sober ear desire more than is there said? First, the inveighing itself, with what a crash is it hurled as it were, to awaken their stupefied senses!”

Therefore, having analyzed these verses, he says, “How beautiful this is, and how it affects those who, reading, understand, there is no use in saying to one who does not himself feel it. More illustrations of the rules of rhetoric may be found in this one place, which I have selected. But a good hearer will not be so much instructed by a diligent discussion of them, as he will be kindled by their glowing reading. For these things were not composed by human industry, but were poured forth in eloquent wisdom from the Divine Mind, wisdom not aiming at eloquence, but eloquence not departing from wisdom.” “For if, as some most eloquent and acute men could see and tell, those things which are learned as by an art of rhetoric, would not be observed and noted and reduced to this system, unless they were first found in the genius of orators, what wonder if they be found in those also, whom “He” sends, who creates genius? Wherefore we may well confess that our canonical writers and teachers are not wise only but eloquent, with that eloquence which beseems their character.”

Jerome, in applying to Amos words which Paul spoke of himself, “rude in speech but not in knowledge” (~~4106~~2 Corinthians 11:6), doubtless was thinking mostly of the latter words, for he adds, “For the same Spirit who spoke through all the prophets, spake in him.” Dr. Lowth says happily (*de Poesi Hebr. Prael. xxi.*), “Jerome calls Amos, rude in speech but not in knowledge, implying of him what Paul modestly professed as to himself, on whose authority many have spoken of this prophet, as though he were

altogether rude, ineloquent, unadorned. Far otherwise! Let any fair judge read his writings, thinking not who wrote them, but what he wrote, he will think that our shepherd was “in no wise behind the very chiefest” prophets; in the loftiness of his thoughts and the magnificence of his spirit, nearly equal to the highest, and in the splendor of his diction and the elegance of the composition scarcely inferior to any. For the same Divine Spirit moved by His inspiration Isaiah and Daniel in the court, David and Amos by the sheepfold; always choosing fitting interpreters of God’s Will and sometimes perfecting praise out of the mouth of babes. Of some He uses the eloquence; others He makes eloquent.”

It has indeed been noticed that in regularity of structure he has an elegance unique to himself. The strophæic form, into which he has cast the heavy prophecies of the two first chapters adds much to their solemnity; the recurring “burden” of the fourth chapter, “Yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord” (^{<3046>}Amos 4:6,8,9,10,11), gives it a deep pathos of its own. Indeed no other prophet has bound his prophecies into one, with so much care as to their outward form, as this inspired shepherd. Amos (to use human terms) was not so much the poet as the sacred orator. One of those energetic turns which have been already instanced, would suffice to stamp the human orator. Far more, they have shaken through and through souls steeped in sin from the prophet’s time until now. It has been said of human eloquence, “he lightened, thundered, he commingled Greece.” The shepherd has shaken not one country, but the world; not by a passing earthquake, but by the awe of God which, with electric force, streamed through his words.

Some variation of dialect, or some influence of his shepherd-life upon his pronunciation, has been imagined in Amos. But it relates to five words only. In three, his orthography differs by a single letter from that found elsewhere in Hebrew. In two cases, the variation consists in the use of a different sibilant; the third in the use of a weaker guttural. Besides these, he uses a softer sound of the name Isaac, which also occurs in Jeremiah and a Psalm; and in another word, he, in common with two Psalms, employs a root with a guttural, instead of that common in Hebrew which has a strong sibilant. In four of these cases, Amos uses the softer form; in the fifth, we only know that the two sibilants were pronounced differently once, but cannot guess what the distinction was. The two sibilants are interchanged in several Hebrew words, and on no rule, that we can discover. In another of the sibilants, the change made by Amos is just the reverse of that of the

Ephraimites who had only the pronunciation of “s” for “sh”; “sibboleth” for “shibboleth.” But the Ephraimites could not pronounce the “sh” at all; the variation in Amos is limited to a single word. The like variations to these instances in Amos are also found in other words in the Bible. On the whole, we may SUSPECT the existence of a softer pronunciation in the South of Judaea, where Amos lived; but the only safe inference is, the extreme care with which the words have been handed down to us, just as the prophet spoke and wrote them.

It has been noticed already that Amos and Hosea together show, that all the Mosaic festivals and sacrifices, priests, prophets, a temple, were retained in Israel, only distorted to calf-worship (See the introduction to Hosea.) Even the third-year’s tithes they had not ventured to get rid of (See the introduction to Hosea.) Amos supplies some yet more minute traits of ritual; that they had the same rules in regard to leaven (<3015>Amos 4:5); that their altar too had horns (as prescribed in the law), on which the blood of the sacrifices was to be sprinkled (<3034>Amos 3:14, see <0270>Exodus 27:2; 29:12; <0305>Leviticus 4:25), they had the altar-bowls (<3016>Amos 6:6) from where the blood of the victim was sprinkled,^{f123} such as the princes of the congregation offered in the time of Moses (<0403>Numbers 7:13ff), and their rich men, at times at least, plundered to drink wine from. They had also true Nazarites, raised up among them, as well as true prophets; and they felt the weight of the influence of these religious people against them, since they tried by fraud or violence to make them break their vow (<3012>Amos 2:12). Amos, while upbraiding their rich men for breaking the law between man and man, presupposes that the Law of Moses was, in this respect also, acknowledged among them. For in his words, “they turn aside the way of the meek” (<3017>Amos 2:7; 5:12, see <0276>Exodus 23:6; <0569>Deuteronomy 16:19; 24:17; 27:19) “they turn aside the poor in the gate” (<3018>Amos 2:8, see <0226>Exodus 22:26,27) “they take a ransom” (<3052>Amos 5:12) (from the rich for their misdeeds), he retains the unique term of the Pentateuch; as also in that, “on clothes laid to pledge (<3018>Amos 2:8, see <0226>Exodus 22:26,27) they lie down by every altar;” “who make the Ephah small” (<3018>Amos 8:5, see <0524>Deuteronomy 25:14,15). “Balances of deceit” (<3018>Amos 8:5) are the contrary of what are enjoined in the law, “balances of right” (<0396>Leviticus 19:36). In upbraiding them for a special impurity, forbidden in principle by the law (<0520>Deuteronomy 23:1) he uses the sanction often repeated in the law “to profane My Holy Name” (<3017>Amos 2:7; <0318>Leviticus 20:3). In the punishments which he

mentions, he uses terms in which God threatens those punishments. The two remarkable words, rendered “blasting and mildew” (<3049>Amos 4:9; <6322>Deuteronomy 28:22), occur only in Deuteronomy, and in Solomon’s prayer founded upon it (<10857>1 Kings 8:37), and in Haggai (<3017>Haggai 2:17) where he is referring to Amos. In the words, “as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah” (<3041>Amos 4:11; <6323>Deuteronomy 29:23), the special term and form of Deuteronomy, as well as the threat, are retained. The threat, “Ye have built houses of hewn stone, and ye shall not dwell therein; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof;” but blends and enlarges those in Deuteronomy (<3161>Amos 5:11; <6330>Deuteronomy 28:30,39). The remarkable term describing their unrepentance is taken from the same (<3046>Amos 4:6,8,9,10, see <6342>Deuteronomy 4:29). So also the image of “gall and wormwood” (<3162>Amos 6:12, from <6328>Deuteronomy 29:18), two bitter plants, into which they turned judgment and righteousness. There are other verbal reminiscences of the Pentateuch, interwoven with the words of Amos, which presuppose that it was in the memory of both the prophet and his hearers in Israel (see <3012>Amos 2:2,10,11; 3:2; 6:1; 7:16; 9:8,12). Indeed, after that long slavery of 400 years in Egypt, the traditions of the spots, hallowed by God’s intercourse with the patriarchs, probably even their relations to “Edom their brother” (<3000>Amos 1:11), must have been lost. The book of Genesis did not embody popular existing traditions of this sort, but must have revived them. The idolatry of Beersheba,^{f124} as well as that of Gilead, alluded to by Hosea, as also Jeroboam’s choice of Bethel itself for the calf-worship (Ibid.), imply on the part of the idolaters a knowledge and belief of the history, which they must have learned from the Pentateuch. Doubtless, it had been a part of Jeroboam’s policy to set up, opposite the exclusive claim for the temple at Jerusalem, rival places of traditionary holiness from the mercies of God to their forefathers, much as Muhammed availed himself of the memory of Abraham, to found his claim for an interest in Jerusalem. But these traditions too must have been received BY the people, not derived FROM them. They were not brought with them from Egypt. The people, enslaved, degraded, sensualized, and idolatry-loving, had no hearts to cherish the memories of the pure religion of their great forefathers, who worshipped the unimagined Self-existing God.

As Amos employed the language of the Pentateuch and cited the Book of Joel, so it seems more probable, that in the burden of his first prophecies (Amos 1:4,7,10,12; 2:2,5; It is slightly varied in <3000>Amos 1:14), “I will

send a fire upon ... and it shall devour the palaces of ..." he took the well-known words of Hosea (^{<3074>}Hosea 7:14), and, by their use, gave a unity to their prophecies, than that Hosea, who uses no language except that of the Pentateuch, should, in the one place where he employs this form, have limited the "burden" of Amos to the one case of Judah. Besides, in Hosea, the words, declaring the destruction of the cities and palaces of Judah, stand in immediate connection with Judah's wrong temper in building them whereas in Amos they are insulated. Beside this, the language of the two prophets does not bear upon each other, except that both have the term "balances of deceit" (^{<3078>}Hosea 12:8 (verse 7 in English); ^{<3085>}Amos 8:5), which was originally formed in contrast with what God had enjoined in the law, "balances of right," and which stands first in the Proverbs of Solomon (^{<3103>}Proverbs 11:1; 20:23).

Of later prophets, Jeremiah renewed against Damascus the prophecy of Amos in his own words; only, the memory of Hazael having been obliterated perhaps in the destruction under Tiglath-Pileser, Jeremiah calls it not after Hazael, but by its own name and that of Benhadad (^{<3427>}Jeremiah 49:27). The words of Amos had once been fulfilled, and its people had been transported to Kir. Probably fugitives had again repopulated it, and Jeremiah intended to point out, that the sentence pronounced through Amos was not yet exhausted. On the similar ground probably, when upbraiding Ammon for the similar sins and for that for which Amos had denounced woe upon it, its endeavor to displace Israel (^{<3001>}Amos 1:13; ^{<3401>}Jeremiah 49:1), Jeremiah used the words of Amos, "their king shall go into captivity — and his princes together" (^{<3001>}Amos 1:15; ^{<3403>}Jeremiah 49:3). In a similar manner, Haggai upbraids the Jews of his day for their impotence under God's chastisements, in words varied in no essential from those of Amos (^{<3009>}Amos 4:9; ^{<3029>}Haggai 2:19). The words of Amos, so repeated to the Jews upon their restoration, sounded, as it were, from the desolate heritage of Israel, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto thee."

Other reminiscences of the words of Amos are only a part of the harmony of Scripture,^{f125} the prophets in this way too indicating their unity with one another, that they use the words, the one of the other.

The might of Amos' teaching at the time, the state-priest Amaziah impressed on Jeroboam. Contemptuous toward Amos himself, Amaziah admitted the truth to Jeroboam. "The land is not able to bear all his

(Amos') words." Doubtless, as the Jews were mad against Stephen, "not" being "able to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spake" (~~4160~~ Acts 6:10), so God accompanied with power His servant's words to His people. They had already seen God's words fulfilled against the houses of Jeroboam I, of Baasha, of Ahab. That same doom was now renewed against "the house of Jeroboam," and with it the prophecy of the dispersion of the ten tribes (~~3167~~ Amos 5:27; 7:8,9,17), which Hosea contemporaneously foretold (~~3106~~ Hosea 1:6; 9:17). The two prophets of Israel confirmed one another, but also left themselves no escape. They staked the whole reputation of their prophecy on this definite issue. We know it to have been fulfilled on the house of Jeroboam; yet the house of Jeroboam was firmer than any before or after it. We know of the unaccustomed captivity of the ten tribes. Had they not been carried captive, prophecy would have come to shame; and such in proportion is its victory. Each step was an installment, a pledge, of what followed. The death of Zechariah, Jeroboam's son, was the first step in the fulfillment of the whole; then probably, in the invasion of Pul against Menahem (~~1259~~ 2 Kings 15:19), followed the doom of Amaziah. God is not anxious to vindicate His word. He does not, as to Shebna (~~2327~~ Isaiah 22:17,18), or Amaziah, or the false prophets Ahab, Zedekiah (~~2421~~ Jeremiah 29:20-22), or Shemaiah (~~2332~~ Jeremiah 29:32), or Pashur (~~3116~~ Jeremiah 20:6), or other false prophets (~~2445~~ Jeremiah 14:15). At times, as in the case of Hananiah (~~2437~~ Jeremiah 28:17), Scripture records the individual fulfillment of God's judgments. Mostly, it passes by unnoticed the execution of God's sentence. The sentence of the criminal, unless reprieved, in itself implies the execution.^{f126} The fact impressed those who witnessed it; the record of the judgment suffices for us.

Then followed, under Tiglath-pileser, the fulfillment of the prophecy as to Damascus (Amos 1:5), and Gilead (~~3164~~ Amos 6:14). Under Sargon was fulfilled the prophecy on the ten tribes (~~3167~~ Amos 5:27; 7:8,9,17; 9:8). That on Judah (~~3116~~ Amos 2:5) yet waited 133 years, and then was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar. A few years later, and he executed God's judgments foretold by Amos on their enemies, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre (Amos 1:9; 2:3). (Amos 1:6-8): Kings of Egypt, Assyria, and the Macedonian Alexander the Great fulfilled in succession the prophecy as to Philistia. So various were the human wills, so multitudinous the events, which were to bring about the simple words of the shepherd-prophet. Amos foretells the events; he DOES say, why the judgments should come. Amos does NOT

foretell when, or through whom the judgments would come. Nevertheless, he foretells the events themselves absolutely, and they came. Like Joel, he foretells the conversion of the pagan and anticipates so far the prophecies of Isaiah, that God would work this through the restoration of the house of David, when fallen. It is a strange comment upon human greatness that the royal line was not to be employed in the salvation of the world until it was fallen! The royal palace had to become the hut of Nazareth before the Redeemer of the world could be born, whose glory and kingdom were not of this world, who came, to take nothing from us but our nature, that He might sanctify it, our misery, that He might bear it for us. Yet flesh and blood could not foresee it before it came, as flesh and blood could not believe it, after He came.

THE BOOK OF AMOS

NOTES ON AMOS 1

<000>**Amos 1:1.** *The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen* “Amos begins by setting forth his own nothingness, and withal the great grace of his Teacher and Instructor, the Holy Spirit, referring all to His glory.” He, like David, Peter, Paul, Matthew, was one of “the weak things of the world, whom God chose to confound the mighty.” He was himself a herdsman only “among herdsmen;” but the words which he spake were not his own. They were words which he saw, not with eyes of flesh, but “with that vision wherewith words can be seen, the seer’s vision in the mind.” They were “words concerning,” or rather “upon Israel,” heavy words coming upon the heavy transgressions of Israel. The Hebrew word “saw” is not of mere sight, but of a vision given by God. Amos only says that they were “his” words, in order immediately to add, that they came to him from God, that he himself was but the human organ through which God spake.

Two years before the earthquake This earthquake must plainly have been one of the greatest, since it was vividly in people’s memories in the time of Zechariah, and Amos speaks of it as “the earthquake.” The earthquakes of the east, like that of Lisbon, destroy whole cities. In one, a little before the birth of our Lord (Josephus, Ant. xv. 5. 2), “some ten thousand were buried under the ruined houses.” This terrific earthquake (for as such Zechariah describes it) was one of the preludes of that displeasure of God, which Amos foretold. A warning of two years, and time for repentance, were given, “before the earthquake” should come, the token and beginning of a further shaking of both kingdoms, unless they should repent. In effect, it was the first flash of the lightning which consumed them.

<000>**Amos 1:2.** *The Lord will roar* Amos joins on his prophecy to the end of Joel’s, in order at once in its very opening to attest the oneness of their mission, and to prepare people’s minds to see, that his own prophecy was an expansion of those words, declaring the nearer and coming judgments of God. Those nearer judgments, however, of which he spake, were but the preludes of the judgments of the Great Day which Joel foretold, and of that

last terrible voice of Christ, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah,” of whom Jacob prophesies;

“He couched, He lay down as a lion, and as a young lion; who shall raise Him up?” (~~44B~~Genesis 49:9).

God is said to “utter His” awful “voice from Zion and Jerusalem,” because there He had set His Name, there He was present in His Church. It was, as it were, His own place, which He had hallowed by tokens of His presence, although “the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him.” In the outset of his prophecy, Amos warned Israel, that there, not among themselves in their separated state, God dwelt. Jeremiah, in using these same words toward Judah, speaks not of Jerusalem, but of heaven;

“The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation” (~~257D~~Jeremiah 25:30).

The prophecy is to the ten tribes or to the pagan: God speaks out of the Church. He uttereth His Voice out of Jerusalem, as He saith,

“Out of Zion shall go forth, the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (~~24B~~Isaiah 2:3),

“where was the Temple and the worship of God, to shew that God was not in the cities of Israel, that is, in Dan and Bethel, where were the golden calves, nor in the royal cities of Samaria and Jezreel, but in the true religion which was then in Zion and Jerusalem.”

And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn Perhaps, with a feeling for the home which he had loved and left, the prophet’s first thought amid the desolation which he predicts, was toward his own shepherd-haunts. The well-known Mount Carmel^{f127} was far in the opposite direction in the tribe of Asher. Its name is derived from its richness and fertility, perhaps “a land of vine and olive yards.” In Jerome’s time, it was (in Jerome, iv. 26) “thickly studded with olives, shrubs and vineyards.” “Its very summit of glad pasturcs.” It is one of the most striking natural features of Palestine. It ends a line of hills, 18 miles long, by a long bold headland reaching out far into the Mediterranean, and forming the south side of the Bay of Acco or Acre. Rising 1,200 feet above the sea (Schubert in Ritter, xvi. 721. Porter says 1750. (Handbook, 371)), it stands out “like some guardian of its native strand;” yet withal, it was rich with every variety of beauty, flower, fruit, and tree. It is almost always called “the Carmel,” “the rich garden-

ground.” From its neighborhood to the sea, heavy dews nightly supply it with an ever-renewed freshness, so that in mid-summer it is green and flowery (Thomson, *The land*, etc. ii. 231). Travelers describe it, as (O. V. Richter)

“quite green, its top covered with firs and oaks, lower down with olives and laurels, and everywhere excellently watered.”

“There is not a flower,” says Van de Velde (i. 317,318), “that I have seen in Galilee or on the plains along the coasts, that I do not find here again on Carmel. It is still the same fragrant lovely mountain as of old.”

(O. V. Richter):

“Its varied world of flowers attracts such a number of the rarer vari-colored insects that a collector might for a whole year be richly employed.”

“It is a natural garden and repository of herbs.” Its pastures were rich, so as to equal those of Bashan.

“It gives rise to a number of crystal streams, the largest of which gushes from the spring of Elijah” (~~2609~~Jeremiah 50:19; ~~3004~~Nahum 1:4).

It had abundant supplies in itself. If it too became a desert, what else would be spared?

“If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” (~~4231~~Luke 23:31).

All, high and low, shall be stricken in one common desolation; all the whole land, fromm “the pastures of the shepherds” in the south to Mount Carmel in the North. And this, as soon as God had spoken. “He spake, and it was made.” So now, contrariwise, He uttercth His Voice, and Carmel hath languished. Its glory hath passed away, as in the twinkling of an eye. God hath spoken the word, and it is gone.

What depended on God’s gifts, abides; what depended on man, is gone. There remains a wild beauty still; but it is the beauty of natural luxuriance. “All,” says one who explored its depths (Van de Velde, i. 318), “lies waste; all is a wilderness. The utmost fertility is here lost for man, useless to man.

The vineyards of Carmel, where are they now? Behold the long rows of stones on the ground, the remains of the walls; they will tell you that here, where now with difficulty you force your way through the thick entangled copse, lay, in days of old, those incomparable vineyards to which Carmel owes its name.”

Amos 1:3. The order of God’s threatenings seems to have been addressed to gain the hearing of the people. The punishment is first denounced upon their enemies, and that, for their sins, directly or indirectly, against themselves, and God in them. Then, as to those enemies themselves, the order is not of place or time, but of their relation to God’s people. It begins with their most oppressive enemy, Syria; then Philistia, the old and ceaseless, although less powerful, enemy; then Tyre, not an oppressor, as these, yet violating a relation which they had not, the bonds of a former friendship and covenant; malicious also and hardhearted through covetousness. Then follow Edom, Ammon, Moab, who burst the bonds of blood also. Lastly and nearest of all, it falls on Judah, who had the true worship of the true God among them, but despised it. Every infliction on those like ourselves finds an echo in our own consciences. Israel heard and readily believed God’s judgments upon others. It was not tempted to set itself against believing them. How then could it refuse to believe of itself, what it believed of others like itself? “Change but the name, the tale is told of thee (Horace),” was a pagan saying which has almost passed into a proverb. The course of the prophecy convicted “them,” as the things written in Holy Scripture “for our ensamples” convict Christians. “If they” who “sinned without law, perished without law” (~~412~~Romans 2:12), how much more should they who “have sinned in the law, be judged by the law.” God’s judgments rolled round like a thunder-cloud, passing from land to land, giving warning of their approach, at last to gather and center on Israel itself, except it repent. In the visitations of others, it was to read its own; and that, the more, the nearer God was to them. “Israel” is placed the last, because on it the destruction was to fall to the uttermost, and rest there.

For three transgressions and for four These words express, not four transgressions added to the three, but an additional transgression beyond the former, the last sin, whereby the measure of sin, which before was full, overflows, and God’s wrath comes. So in other places, where the like form of words occurs, the added number is one beyond, and mostly relates to something greater than all the rest. So,

“He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee” (~~1859~~ Job 5:19).

The word, “yea,” denotes, that the seventh is some heavier trouble, beyond all the rest, which would seem likely to break endurance. Again, “give a portion to seven, and also to eight” (~~2110~~ Ecclesiastes 11:2). Seven is used as a symbol of a whole, since “on the seventh day God rested from all which He had made,” and therefore the number seven entered so largely into the whole Jewish ritual. All time was measured by seven. The rule then is; “give without bounds; when that whole is fulfilled, still give.” Again in that series of sayings in the book of Proverbs (Proverbs 30), the fourth is, in each, something greater than the three preceding. “There are three” things that “are never satisfied;” yea, “four” things “say not,” it is “enough” (~~2115~~ Proverbs 30:15,16). The other things cannot be satisfied; the fourth, fire, grows fiercer by being fed. Again, “There be three” things “which go well; yea, four are comely in going” (~~2119~~ Proverbs 30:29-31). The moral majesty of a king is obviously greater than the rest. So “the handmaid which displaceth her mistress” (~~2121~~ Proverbs 30:21-23) is more intolerable and overbearing than the others. The art and concealment of man in approaching a maiden is of a subtler kind than things in nature which leave no trace of themselves, the eagle in the air, the serpent on the rock, the ship in its pathway through the waves (~~2128~~ Proverbs 30:18,19). Again, “Sowing discord among brethren” (~~2166~~ Proverbs 6:16-19), has a special hatefulness, as not only being sin, but causing widewasting sin, and destroying in others the chief grace, love. Soul-murder is worse than physical murder, and requires more devilish art.

These things Job says, “worketh God twice and thrice with man, to bring back his soul from the pit” (~~1839~~ Job 33:29). The last grace of God, whether sealing up the former graces of those who use them, or vouchsafed to those who have wasted them, is the crowning act of His love or forbearance.

In pagan poetry also, as a trace of a mystery which they had forgotten, three is a sacred whole; from where “thrice and fourfold blessed” stands among them for something exceeding even a full and perfect blessing, a super-abundance of blessings.

The fourth transgression of these pagan nations is alone mentioned. For the prophet had no mission to “them;” he only declares to Israel the ground of the visitation which was to come upon them. The three transgressions

stand for a whole sum of sin, which had not yet brought down extreme punishment; the fourth was the crowning sin, after which God would no longer spare. But although the fourth drew down His judgment, God, at the last, punishes not the last sin only, but all which went before. In that the prophet says, not, “for the fourth,” but “for three transgressions and for four,” he expresses at once, that God did not punish until the last sin, by which “the iniquity” of the sinful nation became “full” (⁰¹⁵¹⁶Genesis 15:16), and that, “then,” He punished for all, for the whole mass of sin described by the three, and for the fourth also. God is longsuffering and ready to forgive; but when the sinner finally becomes a “vessel of wrath” (⁰¹²²Romans 9:22), He punishes all the earlier sins, which, for the time, He passed by. Sin adds to sin, out of which it grows; it does not overshadow the former sins, it does not obliterate them, but increases the mass of guilt, which God punishes. When the Jews killed the Son, there,

“came on” them “all the righteous bloodshed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias” (⁰¹³⁵Matthew 23:35,36; ⁰¹⁵¹Luke 11:50,51).

All the blood of all the prophets and servants of God under the Old Testament came upon that generation. So each individual sinner, who dies impenitent, will be punished for all which, in his whole life, he did or became, contrary to the law of God. Deeper sins bring deeper damnation at the last. So Paul speaks of those who

“treasure up to” themselves “wrath against the Day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (⁰¹⁰⁵Romans 2:5).

As good people, by the grace of God, do, through each act done by aid of that grace, gain an addition to their everlasting reward, so the wicked, by each added sin, add to their damnation.

Of Damascus Damascus was one of the oldest cities in the world, and one of the links of its contact. It lay in the midst of its plain, a high table-land (“2,200 feet above the sea.” Porter, Five Years in Damascus, i. 26) of rich cultivation, whose breadth, from Anti-libanus eastward, was about half a degree. On the west and north its plain lay sheltered under the range of Anti-libanus; on the east, it was protected by the great desert which intervened between its oasis-territory and the Euphrates. Immediately, it was bounded by the three lakes which receive the surplus of the waters which enrich it. The Barada (the “cold”) having joined the Fijeh, (the

traditional Pharpar”,^{f128} a name which well designates its tumultuous course,^{f129} runs on the north of, and through the city, and then chiefly into the central of the three lakes, the Bahret-el-kibliyeh, (the “south” lake;) thence, it is supposed, but in part also directly, into the Bahret-esh-Shurkiyeh (the “east” lake (Ibid. 375-82. Journ. of Sacr. Literally, 1853. July. Oct.)). The ‘Awaj (the “crooked”) (perhaps the old Amana, “the never-failing,” in contrast with the streams which are exhausted in irrigation) runs near the old south boundary of Damascus (Five Years i. 26. 318. 321. 389. ii. 13, 247, 8), separating it probably from the northern possessions of Israel beyond Jordan, Bashan (in its widest sense), and Jetur or Ituraea. The area has been calculated at 236 square geographical miles (Ibid. 27). This space rather became the center of its dominions, than measured their extent. But it supported a population far beyond what that space would maintain in Europe. Taught by the face of creation around them, where the course of every tiny rivulet, as it burst from the rocks, was marked by a rich luxuriance,^{f130} the Damascenes of old availed themselves of the continual supply from the snows of Hermon or the heights of Anti-libanus, with a systematic diligence¹³¹ was made available to the irrigation of long slips of green which marked its course.” Ibid. p. 332. See Porter, Five Years, i. 21, 277, 8, 9, 321. 358. 375. ii. 276. 306, 7, and accounts of canals i. 23, 372. 376. 321. 393. ii. 14. 16. 247 (at Lebweh ii. 322) and aqueducts i. 329. in Hauran ii. 29. 77), of which, in our northern clime, as we have no need, so we have no idea. “Without the Barada,” says Porter (Ibid. 27, 8), “the city could not exist, and the plain would be a parched desert; but now aqueducts intersect every quarter, and fountains sparkle in almost every dwelling, while innumerable canals extend their ramifications over the vast plain, clothing it with verdure and beauty. Five of these canals are led off from the river at different elevations, before it enters the plain. They are carried along the precipitous banks of the ravine, being in some places tunnelled in the solid rock. The two on the northern side water Salahiyeh at the foot of the hills about a mile from the city, and then irrigate the higher portions of the plain to the distance of nearly twenty miles. Of the three on the south side, one is led to the populous village Daraya, five miles distant; the other two supply the city, its suburbs, and gardens.” The like use was made of every fountain in every larger or lesser plain. Of old it was said (Strabo xvi. 2. 16), “the Chrysorrhoeas (the Barada) “is nearly expended in artificial channels.” (Pliny, v. 18. 16): “Damascus is fertile through drinking up the Chrysorrhoeas by irrigation.” Fourteen names of its canals are still given (Wilson, lands of the Bible, ii.

325. note); and while it has been common to select 7 or 8 chief canals, the whole have been counted up even to 70 (Hajji Chalifa, See Ritter's *Diss. Erdk.* xvii. pp. 1303ff). No art or labor was thought too great. The waters of the Fijeh were carried by a great aqueduct tunnelled through the side of the perpendicular cliff (*Ibid.* 257). Yet this was as nothing. Its whole plain was intersected with canals, and tunneled below. (*Five Years*, i. 394, 5. See further i. 159, 162. 371. ii. 11 (54. 205. of Hauran) 248, 9.358):

“The waters of the river were spread over the surface of the soil in the fields and gardens; underneath, other canals were tunnelled to collect the superfluous water which percolates the soil, or from little fountains and springs below. The stream thus collected is led off to a lower level, where it comes to the surface.

(Porter, *Handbook*, p. 497):

“The whole plain is filled with these singular aqueducts, some of them running for 2 or 3 miles underground. Where the water of one is diffusing life and verdure over the surface, another branch is collecting a new supply.” “In former days these extended over the whole plain to the lakes, thus irrigating the fields and gardens in every part of it.”

Damascus then was, of old, famed for its beauty. Its white buildings, embedded in the deep green of its engirdling orchards, were like diamonds encircled by emeralds. They reach nearly to Anti-libanus (*Five Years*, i. 27) westward (Porter, *Five Years*, i. 29, add pp. 152, 3),

“and extend on both sides of the Barada some miles eastward. They cover an area at last 25 (or 30) miles in circuit, and make the environs an earthly Paradise.”

Whence the Arabs said,^{f132} “If there is a garden of Eden on earth, it is Damascus; and if in heaven, Damascus is like it on earth.” But this its beauty was also its strength.

“The river,” says William of Tyre (xvii. 3), “having abundant water, supplies orchards on both banks, thick-set with fruit-trees, and flows eastward by the city wall. On the west and north the city was far and wide fenced by orchards, like thick dense woods, which stretched four or live miles toward Libanus. These orchards are a most exceeding defense; for from the density of the trees and the

narrowness of the ways, it seemed difficult and almost impossible to approach the city on that side.”

Even to this day it is said (Ali Bey travels, ii. 282),

“The true defense of Damascus consists in its gardens, which, forming a forest of fruit-trees and a labyrinth of hedges, walls and ditches, for more than 7 leagues in circumference, would present no small impediment to a Mussulman enemy.”

The advantage of its site doubtless occasioned its early choice. It lay on the best route from the interior of Asia to the Mediterranean, to Tyre, and even to Egypt. Chedorlaomer and the four kings with him, doubtless, came that way, since the first whom they smote were at Ashteroth Karnaim (⁽⁻⁰¹⁴⁵⁾Genesis 14:5,6) in Jaulan or Gaulonitis, and thence they swept on southward, along the west side of Jordan, smiting, as they went, first the “Zuzim,” (probably the same as the Zamzummim (⁽⁻⁰¹²⁰⁾Deuteronomy 2:20)) in Ammonitis; then “the Emim in the plain of Kiriathaim” in Moab (Deuteronomy 9,11), then “the Horites in Mount Seir unto Elparan” (probably Elath on the Gulf called from it.) They returned that way, since Abraham overtook them at Hobah near Damascus (⁽⁻⁰¹⁴⁵⁾Genesis 14:15). Damascus was already the chief city, through its relation to which alone Hobah was known. It was on the route by which Abraham himself came at God’s command from Haran (Charrae of the Greeks) whether over Tiphsaeh (“the passage,” Thapsacus) or anymore northern passage over the Euphrates. The fact that his chief and confidential servant whom he entrusted to seek a wife for Isaac, and who was, at one time, his heir, was a Damascene (⁽⁻⁰¹⁵²⁾Genesis 15:2,3), implies some intimate connection of Abraham with Damascus. At the time of our era, the name of Abraham was still held in honor in the country of Damascus (Josephus, Ant. i. 7,2); a village was named from him “Abraham’s dwelling;” and a native historian Nicolas (L. iv. ap. Josephus, *ibid.*) said, that he reigned in Damascus on his way from the country beyond Babylon to Canaan. The name of his servant “Eliezer” “my God is help,” implies that at this time too the servant was a worshiper of the One God. The name Damascus probably betokened the strenuous (Dimashko, Damshako, “swift, ready, strenuous.” Arabic), energetic character of its founder. Like the other names connected with Aram in the Old Testament,^{f133} it is, in conformity with the common descent from Aram, Aramaic. It was no part of the territory assigned to Israel, nor was it molested by them. Judging, probably, of David’s

defensive conquests by its own policy, it joined the other Syrians who attacked David, was subdued, garrisoned, and became tributary (^{<1085>}2 Samuel 8:5,6). It was at that time probably a subordinate power, whether on the ground of the personal eminence of Hadadezer king of Zobah, or any other. Certainly Hadadezer stands out conspicuously; the Damascenes are mentioned only subordinately. Consistently with this, the first mention of the kingdom of Damascus in Scripture is the dynasty of Rezon son of Eliada's, a fugitive servant of Hadadezer, who formed a marauding band, then settled and reigned in Damascus (^{<1112>}1 Kings 11:23,24). Before this, Scripture speaks of the people only of Damascus, not of their kings. Its native historian admits that the Damascenes were, in the time of David, and continued to be, the aggressors, while he veils over their repeated defeats, and represents their kings, as having reigned successively from father to son, for ten generations, a thing unknown probably in any monarchy. (Nicolaus, *Damasc. Hist.* iv. in Josephus, *Ant.* vii. 2. 2):

“A native, Adad, having gained great power, became king of Damascus and the rest of Syria, except Phoenicia. He, having carried war against David, king of Judaea, and disputed with him in many battles, and that finally at the Euaphrates where he was defeated, had the character of a most eminent king for prowess and valor. After his death, his descendants reigned for ten generations, each receiving from his father the name (Hadad) together with the kingdom, like the Ptolemies of Egypt. The third, having gained the greatest power of all, seeking to repair the defeat of his grandfather, warring against the Jews, wasted what is now called Samaritis.”

They could not brook a defeat, which they had brought upon themselves. Rezon renewed, throughout the later part of Solomon's reign, the aggression of Hadad. On the schism of the ten tribes, the hostility of Damascus was concentrated against Israel who lay next to them. Abijam was in league with the father of Benhadad (^{<1159>}1 Kings 15:19). Benhadad at once broke his league with Baasha at the request of Asa in his later mistrustful days (^{<1362>}1 Chronicles 16:2-7), and turned against Baasha (^{<1362>}1 Chronicles 16:2-7 and ^{<1153>}1 Kings 15:20). From Omri also Benhadad I took cities and extorted “streets,” probably a Damascus quarter, in Samaria itself (^{<1234>}1 Kings 20:34). Benhadad II had “thirty-two” vassal “kings” (^{<1200>}1 Kings 20:1,24), (dependent kings like those of Canaan, each of his own city and little territory,) and led them against Samaria, intending to

plunder it (^{<1176>}1 Kings 20:6,7), and, on occasion of the plundering, probably to make it his own or to destroy it. By God's help they were twice defeated; the second time, when they directly challenged the power of God (^{<1172>}1 Kings 20:22-25,28), so signally that, had not Ahab been flattered by the appeal to his mercy (^{<1173>}1 Kings 20:31,32), Syria would no more have been in a condition to oppress Israel. Benhadad promised to restore the cities which his father had taken from Israel, and to make an Israel-quarter in Damascus (^{<1173>}1 Kings 20:34). If this promise was fulfilled, Ramoth-Gilead must have been lost to Syria at an earlier period, since, three years afterward, Ahab perished in an attempt, by aid of Jehoshaphat, against the counsels of God, to recover it (1 Kings 22). Ramoth-Gilead being thus in the hands of Syria, all north of it, half of Dan and Manasseh beyond Jordan, must also have been conquered by Syria. Except the one great siege of Samaria, which brought it to extremities and which God dissipated by a panic which He infused into the Syrian army (^{<1176>}2 Kings 7:6). Benhadad and Hazael encouraged only marauding expeditions against Israel during the 14 years of Ahaziah and Jehoram. Benhadad was, according to Assyrian inscriptions defeated thrice, Hazael twice, by Shalmanubar king of Assyria (See Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 464).

Benhadad appears to have acted on the offensive, in alliance with the kings of the Hittites, the Hamathites and Phoenicians (See Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 464); Hazael was attacked alone, driven to take refuge in Anti-libanus, and probably became tributary (Ibid. Dr. Hincks, *Dubl. Univ. Mag.* Oct. 1853, pp. 422, 5, 6). Assyrian chronicles relate only Assyrian victories. The brief notice, that through Naaman "the Lord gave deliverance to Syria" (^{<1171>}2 Kings 5:1), probably refers to some signal check which Assyria received through him. For there was no other enemy, from whom Syria had to be "delivered." Subsequently to that retreat from Samaria, he even lost Ramoth (^{<1194>}2 Kings 9:14,15) to Jehoram after a battle before it (^{<1189>}2 Kings 8:29), in which Jehoram was wounded. It is a probable conjecture (Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. p. 465) that Jehu, by his political submission to Assyria, drew on himself the calamities which Elisha foretold. Hazael probably became the instrument of God in chastening Israel, while he was avenging Jehu's submission to a power whom he dreaded and from whom he had suffered. Israel, having lost the help of Judah, became the easier prey. Hazael not only took from Israel all east of Jordan (^{<1192>}2 Kings 10:32,33), but made the whole open country unsafe for the Israelites to dwell in. Not until God "gave Israel a saviour," could they

“dwell in their tents as beforetime” (^{<12136>}2 Kings 13:5). Hazael extended his conquests to Gath (^{<12127>}2 Kings 12:17), intending probably to open a connecting line with Egypt. “With a small company of men” he defeated a large army of Judah (^{<12123>}2 Chronicles 24:23,24). Joash, king of Judah, bought him off, when advancing against Jerusalem, with everything of gold, consecrated or civil, in the temple or in his own treasures (^{<12128>}2 Kings 12:18). Jehoash recovered from Benhadad III the cities this side Jordan (^{<12135>}2 Kings 13:25); Jeroboam II, all their lost territories and even Damascus and Hamath (^{<12148>}2 Kings 14:28). Yet after this, it was to recover its power under Rezin, to become formidable to Judah, and, through its aggressions on Judah, to bring destruction on itself. At this time, Damascus was probably, like ourselves, a rich, commercial, as well as warlike, but not as yet a manufacturing (see the note at ^{<11812>}Amos 3:12) nation. Its wealth, as a great emporium of transit-commerce, (as it is now) furnished it with sinews for war. The “white wool” (^{<12178>}Ezekiel 27:18), in which it traded with Tyre, implies the possession of a large outlying tract in the desert, where the sheep yield the whitest wool. It had then doubtless, beside the population of its plain, large nomadic hordes dependent upon it.

I will not turn away the punishment thereof Literally, “I will not turn it back.” What was this, which God would not turn back? Amos does not express it. Silence is often more emphatic than words. Not naming it, he leaves it the rather to be conceived of by the mind, as something which had been of old coming upon them to overwhelm them, which God had long stayed back, but which, since He would now stay it no longer, would burst in, with the more terrific and overwhelming might, because it had been restrained before. Sin and punishment are by a great law of God bound together. God’s mercy holds back the punishment long, allowing only some slight tokens of His displeasure to show themselves, that the sinful soul or people may not be unwarned. When He no longer withholds it, the law of His moral government holds its course. “Seldom,” said pagan experience (Horace),

“hath punishment with lingering foot parted with the miscreant,
advancing before.”

Because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron The instrument, Jerome relates here, was “a sort of wain, rolling on iron wheels beneath, set with teeth; so that it both threshed out the grain and bruised the straw and cut it in pieces, as food for the cattle, for lack of hay.” A

similar instrument, called by nearly the same name, is still in use in Syria and Egypt. Elisha had foretold to Hazael his cruelty to Israel;

“Their strong holds thou wilt set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child” (^{<1182>}2 Kings 8:12).

Hazael, like others gradually steeped in sin, thought it impossible, but did it. In the days of Jehu,

“Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel from Jordan eastward; all the land of Gilead, the Gadites and the Reubenites and the Manassites, from Arorer which is by the River Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan” (^{<1202>}2 Kings 10:32,33);

in those of Jehoahaz, Jehu’s son,

“he oppressed them, neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen, for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing” (^{<1213>}2 Kings 13:7).

The death here spoken of, although more ghastly, was probably not more severe than many others; not nearly so severe as some which have been used by Christian Judicatures. It is mentioned in the Proverbs, as a capital punishment (^{<3116>}Proverbs 20:26); and is alluded to as such by Isaiah (^{<2338>}Isaiah 28:28). David had had, for some cause unexplained by Holy Scripture, to inflict it on the Ammonites (^{<1021>}2 Samuel 12:31; ^{<1318>}1 Chronicles 20:3). Probably not the punishment in itself alone, but the attempt so to extirpate the people of God brought down this judgment on Damascus.

Theodoret supposes the horrible aggravation, that it was thus that the women with child were destroyed with their children, “casting the aforesaid women, as into a sort of threshing-floor, they savagely threshed them out like ears of grain with saw-armed wheels.”

Gilead is here doubtless to be taken in its widest sense, including all the possessions of Israel, east of Jordan, as, in the account of Hazael’s conquests, “all the land of Gilead” (^{<1202>}2 Kings 10:32,33) is explained to mean, all which was ever given to the two tribes and a half, and to include Gilead proper, as distinct from Basan. In like way Joshua relates, that

“the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned to go into the country of Gilead, to the land of their possessions” (⁽⁴⁶²¹⁹⁾Joshua 22:9).

Throughout that whole beautiful tract, including 2 1/2 degrees of latitude, Hazael had carried on his war of extermination into every peaceful village and home, sparing neither the living nor the unborn.

Amos 1:4. *And I will send a fire on the house of Hazael* The fire is probably at once material fire, whereby cities are burned in war, since he adds, “it shall devour the palaces of Benhadad,” and also stands as a symbol of all other severity in war as in the ancient proverb,

“a fire is gone out from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon; it hath consumed Ar of Moab, the lords of the high places of Arnon” (⁽⁴⁶²¹⁸⁾Numbers 21:28);

and again of the displeasure of Almighty God, as when He says,

“a fire is kindled in Mine anger, and it shall burn unto the lowest hell” (⁽⁴⁶²²²⁾Deuteronomy 32:22).

For the fire destroys not the natural buildings only, but “the house of Hazael,” that is, his whole family. In these prophecies, a sevenfold vengeance by fire is denounced against the seven people, an image of the eternal fire into which all iniquity shall be cast.

The palaces of Benhadad Hazael, having murdered Benhadad his master and ascended his throne, called Iris son after his murdered master, probably in order to connect his own house with the ancient dynasty. Benhadad, that is, son or worshiper of the idol “Hadad,” or “the sun,” had been the name of two of the kings of the old dynasty. Benhadad III was at this time reigning. The prophet foretells the entire destruction of the dynasty founded in blood. The prophecy may have had a fulfillment in the destruction of the house of Hazael, with whose family Rezin, the king of Syria in the time of Ahaz, stands in no known relation. Defeats, such as those of Benhadad III by Jeroboam II who took Damascus itself, are often the close of an usurping dynasty. Having no claim to regard except success, failure vitiates its only title. The name Hazael, “whom God looked upon,” implies a sort of owning of the One God, like Tab-el, “God is good,” El-iada’, “whom God knoweth,” even amid the idolatry in the names, Tab-Rimmon, “good is Rimmon;” Hadad-ezer, “Hadad is help;”

and Hadad, or Benhadad. Bad men abuse every creature, or ordinance, or appointment of God. It may be then that, as Sennacherib boasted, “am I now come up without the Lord against this land” to destroy it? the Lord said unto me, Go up against this land and destroy it” (^{<2360>}Isaiah 36:10); so Hazael made use of the prophecy of Elisha, to give himself out as the scourge of God, and thought of himself as one “on whom God looked.” Knowledge of futurity is an awful gift. As “Omniscience alone can wield Omnipotence,” so superhuman knowledge needs superhuman gifts of wisdom and holiness. Hazael seemingly hardened himself in sin by aid of the knowledge which should have been his warning. Probably he came to Elisha, with the intent to murder his master already formed, in case he should not die a natural death; and Elisha read him to himself. But he very probably justified himself to himself in what he had already purposed to do, on the ground that Elisha had foretold to him that he should be king over (^{<1283>}2 Kings 8:13), and, in his massacres of God’s people, gave himself out as being, what he was, the instrument of God. “Scourges of God” have known themselves to be what they were, although they themselves were not the less sinful, in sinfully accomplishing the Will of God (see the note at ^{<3004>}Hosea 1:4). We have heard of a Christian Emperor, who has often spoken of his “mission,” although his “mission” has already cost the shedding of much Christian blood.

Amos 1:5. *I will also break the bar of Damascus* In the East, every city was fortified; the gates of the stronger cities were cased in iron, that they might not be set on fire by the enemy; they were fastened within with bars of brass (^{<1043>}1 Kings 4:13) or iron (^{<1976>}Psalms 107:16; ^{<3812>}Isaiah 45:2; compare ^{<2384>}Isaiah 48:14; ^{<2513>}Jeremiah 51:30). They were flanked with towers, and built over, so that what was naturally the weakest point and the readiest access to an enemy became the strongest defense. In Hauran the huge doors and gates of a single stone 9 and 10 feet high (Burckhardt’s Syria, 90. quoted in Five Years, ii. 201), and 1 1/2 foot thick (Five Years, ii. 196), are still extant, and “the place for the ponderous bars,” proportioned to such gates, “may yet be seen.” The walls were loosened with the battering-ram, or scaled by mounds: the strong gate was seldom attacked; but, when a breach was made, was thrown open from within. The “breaking of the bar” laid open the city to the enemy, to go in and come out at his will. The whole strength of the kingdom of Damascus lay in the capital. It was itself the seat of the empire and was the empire itself. God

says then, that He Himself would shiver all their means of resistance, whatever could hinder the inroad of the enemy.

And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven Literally, “from the vale of vanity,” the “Bik’ah” being a broad vale between hills.^{f134} Here it is doubtless the rich and beautiful valley, still called el-bukaa by the Arabs, La Boquea by William of Tyre (xviii. 17), lying between Lebanon and Anti-libanus, the old Coele-Syria in its narrowest sense. It is, on high ground, the continuation of that long deep valley which, along the Jordan, the Dead sea, and the Arabah, reaches to the Red Sea. Its extreme length, from its southern close at Kal’at-esh-shakif to Hums (Emesa) has been counted at 7 days journey (Berggren, Guide Franc. Arabic p. 458. in Ritter, xvii. 154); it narrows toward its southern extremity, expands at its northern, yet it cannot any how be said to lose its character of a valley until 10 miles north of Riblah (The “end of the central ridge of Anti-lebanon.” Porter, Handbook, p. 578). Midway, on its (See V. de Velde, Memoir, p. 175),” was Baalbek, or Heliopolis, where the Egyptian worship is said to have been brought of old times from their “city of the sun ((Lucian) de Syria Dea Section 5. Macr. Sat. i. 23. Robinson, iii. 518).” Baalbek, as the ruins still attest, was full of the worship of the sun. But the whole of that beautiful range, “a magnificent vista” (Robinson, iii. 493), it has been said, “carpeted with verdure and beauty” (Ibid. 504), “a gem lying deep in its valley of mountains,” was a citadel of idolatry. The name Baal-Hermon connects Mount Hermon itself, the snow-capped height which so towers over its southeast extremity, with the worship of Baal or the sun, and that, from the time of the Judges (~~ORBS~~Judges 3:3). The name Baal-gad connects “the valley of Lebanon,” that is, most probably the south end of the great valley, with the same worship, anterior to Joshua (~~GRIT~~Joshua 11:17; 12:7; 13:5). The name Baalbek is probably an abbreviation of the old name, Baal-bik’ah,^{f135} “Baal of the valley,” in contrast with the neighboring Baalhermon. (Robinson, iii. 432): “The whole of Hermon was girded with temples.” (Porter, Handbook, 451): “Some eight or ten of them cluster round it,” and, which is more remarkable, one is built^{ft136} to catch the first beams of the sun rising over Hermon;” and temples on its opposite sides face toward it, as a sort of center (Ibid. 457. Robinson, iii. 417, 8). In Jerome’s time, the pagan still revered a celebrated temple on its summit.^{f137} On the crest of its central peak, 3,000 feet above the glen below, in winter inaccessible, beholding far asunder the rising and the setting sun on the eastern desert and in the western sea, are still seen the

foundations of a circular wall or ring of large stones, a rude temple, within which another of Grecian art was subsequently built (Porter, 454). “On three other peaks of the Anti-libanus range are ruins of great antiquity”^{f138} (Robinson, iii. 438): “The Bukaa and its borders are full of the like buildings.” “Lebanon, Anti-lebanon and the valleys between are thronged with ancient temples” (Robinson, iii. 417). Some indeed were Grecian, but others Syro-Phoenician. The Grecian temples were probably the revival of Syro-Phoenician. The (Robinson, iii. 520) “massive substructions of Baalbek are conjectured to have been those of an earlier temple.” The new name “Heliopolis” only substituted the name of the object of worship (the sun) for its title Lord. The pagan emperors would not have lavished so much and such wondrous cost and gorgeous art on a temple in Coele-Syria, had not its pagan celebrity recommended it to their superstition or their policy. On the west side of Lebanon at Afca, (Apheca) was the temple of Venus at the source of the River Adonis (Robinson, iii. 606), a center of the most hateful Syrian idolatry (Eusebius, Vit. Construe iii. 55. Ibid), “a school of misdoing for all profligates.” At Heliopolis too, men (Ibid. iii. 58) “shamelessly gave their wives and daughters to shame.” The outburst of paganism there in the reign of Julian the Apostate (Soz. v. 10. Theodoret, H. E. iii. 7. Robinson, iii. 52) shows how deeply rooted was its idolatry. Probably then, Amos pronounces the sentence of the people of that whole beautiful vale, as “valley of vanity” or “iniquity”,^{f139} being wholly given to that worst idolatry which degraded Syria. Here, as the seat of idolatry, the chief judgments of God were to fall. Its inhabitants were to be cut off, that is, utterly destroyed; on the rest, captivity is the only sentence pronounced. The Assyrian monarchs not unfrequently put to death those who despised their religion (See authorities in Rawlinson, Herodotus, t. 495), and so may herein have executed blindly the sentence of God.

From the house of Eden A Proper, but significant, name, “Beth-Eden,” that is, “house of pleasure.” The name, like the Eden of Assyria (^{<12912>}2 Kings 19:12; ^{<23712>}Isaiah 37:12; ^{<32723>}Ezekiel 27:23), is, in distinction from man’s first home, pronounced “EH-den,” not “EE-den” (˘ḍ, not ˘ḍ̄). Two places near, and one in, the Bik’ah have, from similarity of name, been thought to be this “house of delight.”

1. Most beautiful now for situation and climate, is what is probably mispronounced Ehden; a Maronite Village (Irby and Mangles, Travels in Syria, p. 64) “of 4 or 500 families, on the side of a rich highly-cultivated valley” near Beshirrai on the road from Tripolis to the Cedars. Its climate is

described as a ten months spring;^{f140} “the hills are terraced up to their summits;” and every place full of the richest, most beautiful, vegetation; “grain is poured out into the lap of man, and wine into his cup without measure.” “The slopes of the valleys, one mass of verdure, are yet more productive than the hills; the springs of Lebanon gushing down, fresh, cool and melodious in every direction (Lord Lindsey, holy land, p. 355 more fully).” The wealthier families of Tripoli still resort there for summer, “the climate being tempered by the proximity of the snow-mountains, the most luxuriant vegetation favored by the soft airs from the sea (Ritter, *Ibid.*).” It is still counted “ (Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, p. 394) the Paradise of Lebanon.”

2. Beit-el-Janne, literally, “house of Paradise,” is an Arabic translation of Beth-Eden. It “lies under the root of Libanus, (Hermon) gushing forth clear water, whence,” says William of Tyre,^{f141} “it is called ‘house of pleasure.’” It lies in a narrow valley, where it widens a little, about 3/4 of an hour from the plain of Damascus (Burckhardt, *Syria*, pp. 45-47), and about 27 miles (See Burckhardt, corrected in *Five Years*, i. 313) from that city on the way from Baniyas. (Porter, *Handbook*, p. 449): “Numerous rock-tombs, above and around, bear testimony to the antiquity of the site.” It gives its name to the Jennani (Paradise River), one of two streams which form the second great river near Damascus, the Awadj.

3. The third, the *Paradisus* of the Greeks, one of the three towns of Laodicene (Ptol. v. 15. 20), agrees only accidentally with the Scripture name, since their *Paradisus* signifies not an earthly Paradise, but a “hunting-park.” For this the site is well suited; but in that country so abounding in water, and of soil so rich that the earth seems ready, on even slight pains of man, to don itself in luxuriant beauty, what probably is the site^{f142} of the old *Paradisus*, is hopelessly barren^{f143} Beth-Eden may have been the residence of one of the subordinate kings under the king of Damascus, who was to be involved in the ruin of his suzerain; or it may have been a summer-residence of the king of Damascus himself, where, in the midst of his trust in his false gods, and in a Paradise, as it were, of delight, God would cut him off altogether. Neither wealth nor any of a man’s idols protect against God. As Adam, for sin, was expelled from Paradise, so the rulers of Damascus from the place of their pleasure and their sin.

And the people of Syria shall go into captivity Syria or Aram perhaps already included, under the rule of Damascus, all the little kingdoms on this side of the Euphrates, into which it had been formerly sub-divided. At least, it is spoken of as a whole, without any of the additions which occur in the earlier history, Aram-beth-rehob, Aramzobah, Aram-Maachah. Before its captivity Damascus is spoken of as “the head of Syria” (²³⁰⁸Isaiah 7:8).

Into Kir Kir has been identified:

- (1) with the part of Iberia near the River Kur (Dionysius L. 36 Boch. Phal. iv. 32) which unites with the Araxes, not far from the Caspian, to the north of Armenia;
- (2) a city called by the Greeks Kourena (Ptol. vi. 2) or Kourna on the River Mardus (Boch. Phal. iv. 32) in southern Media;
- (3) a city, Karine (Vitr. on ²³²⁶Isaiah 22:6), the modern Kerend (Ritt. Erdk. ix. 359. 391).

The first is the most likely, as the most known; the Kur is part probably of the present name Kurgistan, our “Georgia.” Armenia at least which lay on the south of the River Kur, is frequently mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions, as a country where the kings of Assyria warred and conquered (See in Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 464. 470. 473. 475. 481. 484). The two parricide sons of Sennacherib are as likely to have fled (²³⁷⁸Isaiah 37:38) to a distant portion of their father’s empire, as beyond it. Their flight there may have been the ground of Esarhaddon’s war against it.^{f144} It has at all times afforded a shelter to those expelled from others’ lands (See Ritter, x. 584ff). The domestic, though late, traditions of the Armenians count as their first inhabitants some who had fled out of Mesopotamia to escape the yoke of Bel, king of Babylon (Moses Choren i. 9. Ibid.). Whatever be the value of particular traditions, its mountain-valleys form a natural refuge to fugitives. On occasion of some such oppression, as that from which Asshur fled before Nimrod (⁰¹⁰¹Genesis 10:11. See the introduction to Nahum), Aram may have been the first of those who took shelter in the mountains of Armenia and Georgia, and thence spread themselves, where we afterward find them, in the lowlands of Mesopotamia. The name Aram, however, is in no way connected with Armenia, which is itself no indigenous name of that country, but was probably formed by the Greeks, from a name which they heard.^{f145} The name Aram, “lofty,” obviously describes some quality of the

son of Shem, as of others who bore the name (A son of Kemuel, ~~<1022>~~Genesis 22:21; and son of Sheruer, ~~<1373>~~1 Chronicles 7:34).

Contrariwise, Canaan, (whether or no anticipating his future degraded character as partaking in the sin of Ham) may signify "crouching." But neither has Aram any meaning of "highland," nor Canaan of "lowland," as has of late been imagined.^{f146}

From Kir the forefathers of the Syrians had, of their own will, been brought by the good all-disposing Providence of God; to Kir should the Syrians, against their will, be carried back. Aram of Damascus had been led to a land which, for its fertility and beauty, has been and is still praised as a sort of Paradise. Now, softened as they were by luxury, they were to be transported back to the austere though healthy climate, from where they had come. They had abused the might given to them by God, in the endeavor to uproot Israel; now they were themselves to be utterly uprooted. The captivity which Amos foretells is complete; a captivity by which (as the word means) the land should be bared of its inhabitants. Such a captivity he foretells of no other, except the ten tribes. He foretells it absolutely of these two nations alone (See below as to Israel, or its rich people. ~~<3085>~~Amos 5:5,27; 6:7; 7:11,17), of the king and princes of Ammon (~~<3000>~~Amos 1:15), not of Tyre, or the cities of Philistia, or Edom, or Ammon, or Moab. The punishment did not reach Syria in those days, but in those of Rezin who also oppressed Judah. The sin not being cut off; the punishment too was handed down. Tiglath-pileser carried them away, about 50 years after this, and killed Rezin (~~<2169>~~2 Kings 16:9). In regard to these two nations, Amos foretells the captivity absolutely. Yet at this time, there was no human likelihood, no ground, except of a divine knowledge, to predict it of these two nations especially. They went into captivity too long after this for human foresight to predict it; yet long enough before the captivity of Judah for the fulfillment to have impressed Judah if they would. The transportation of whole populations, which subsequently became part of the standing policy of the Persian and of the later Assyrian Empires, was not, as far as we know, any part of Eastern policy at the time of the prophet. Sesostris, the Egyptian conqueror, some centuries before Amos, is related to have brought together (Herodotus, ii. 107,108) "many men," "a crowd," from the nations whom he had subdued, and to have employed them on his buildings and canals. Even this account has received no support from the Egyptian monuments, and the deeds ascribed by the Greeks to Sesostris have been supposed.^{f147} But the carrying away of tiny

number of prisoners from fields of battle is something altogether different from the political removal of a nation. It had in it nothing systematic or designed. It was but the employment of those whom war had thrown into their hands, as slaves. The Egyptian monarchs availed themselves of this resource, to spare the labor of their native subjects in their great works of utility or of vanity. But the prisoners so employed were but a slave population, analogous to those who, in other nations, labored in the mines or in agriculture. They employed in the like way the Israelites, whom they had received peacefully. Their earlier works were carried on by native labor.^{f148} After Tothmosis III, in whose reign is the first representation of prisoners employed in forced labor (See in Brugsch, p. 106), they could, during their greatness, spare their subjects. They imported labor, not by slave trade, but through war. Nubia was incorporated with Egypt (Ibid. pp. 8, 9), and Nubian prisoners were, of course, employed, not in their own country but in the north of Egypt; Asiatic prisoners in Nubia (Ibid. p. 154). But they were prisoners made in a campaign, not a population; a foreign element in Egyptian soil, not an interchange of subject-populations. Doubtless, “the mixed multitude” (~~(01278)~~ Exodus 12:38), which “went up with” Israel from Egypt, were in part these Asiatic captives, who had been subjected to the same hard bondage. The object and extent of those forced transportations by the later Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians were altogether different. Here the intention was to remove the people from their original seat, or at most to leave those only who, from their fewness or poverty, would be in no condition to rebel. The cuneiform inscriptions have brought before us, to a great extent, the records of the Assyrian conquests, as given by their kings. But whereas the later inscriptions of Sargon, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, mention repeatedly the deportation of populations, the earlier annals of Asshurdanipal or Asshurakhbal relate the carrying off of soldiers only as prisoners, and women as captives (Fox Talbot, Assyrian texts translated, pp. 22, 24, etc.). They mention also receiving slaves as tributes, the number of oxen and sheep, the goods and possessions and the gods of the people which they carry off.^{f149} Else the king relates, how he crucified or impaled or put to death (Fox Talbot, Assyrian texts translated, pp. 22, 24, etc.) men at arms or the people generally, but in no one of his expeditions does he mention any deportation. Often as modern writers assume, that the transportation of nations was part of the hereditary policy of the Monarchs of Asia, no instances before this period have been found. It appears to have been a later policy, first adopted by Tiglath-pileser toward Damascus and east and

north Palestine, but foretold by the prophet long before it was adopted. It was the result probably of experience, that they could not keep these nations in dependence upon themselves while they left them in their old abodes. As far as our knowledge reaches, the prophet foretold the removal of these people, at a time when no instance of any such removal had occurred.

Amos 1:6. *Gaza* Was the southernmost city of the Philistines, as it was indeed of Canaan (^{<1109>}Genesis 10:19) of old, the last inhabited place at the beginning of the desert, on the way from Phoenicia to Egypt (Arr. ii. 27). Its situation was wonderfully chosen, so that, often as a Gaza has been destroyed, a new city has, if even after long intervals, risen up again in the same immediate neighborhood (See further the note at ^{<3104>}Zephaniah 2:4). The fragments of the earlier city became materials for the later. It was first Canaanite (^{<1109>}Genesis 10:19); then Philistine; then, at least after Alexander, Edomite (Alexander repopulated it from its own neighborhood); after Alexander Janneus, Greek (Josephus, Ant. xvii. 11. 4); conquered by Abubekr the first Khalif, it became Arabian; it was desolated in their civil wars, until the Crusaders rebuilt its fort (Will. Tyre. xvii. 12); then again, Muslim. In the earliest times, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gaza was the south angle of the border of the Canaanites, from where it turned to the south of the Dead Sea. Even then it was known by its name of strength, ‘Azzah “the strong,” like our “Fort.” For a time, it stood as an island-fort, while the gigantic race of the Avvim wandered, wilder probably than the modern Bedaween, up to its very gates. For since it is said, “the Avvim dwelt in open villages as far as Gaza” (^{<1123>}Deuteronomy 2:23); plainly they did not dwell in Gaza itself, a fortified town. The description assigns the bound of their habitations, up to the furthest town on the southeast, Gaza. They prowled around it, infested it doubtless, but did not conquer it, and were themselves expelled by the Capthorim. The fortress of the prince of Gaza is mentioned in the great expedition of Tothmosis III (Brugseh, Hist. de l’ Eg. p. 96), as the conquest of Ashkelon was counted worthy of mention in the monuments of Raamses II (Ibid. p. 146). It was strengthened doubtless by giving refuge to the Anakim, who, after Joshua had expelled them “from Hebron” and neighboring cities,

“and the mountains of Judah and Israel, remained in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod” (^{<1121>}Joshua 11:21-23).

Its situation, as the first station for land-commerce to and from Egypt, whether toward Tyre and Sidon, or Damascus and the upper Euphrates, or toward Petra, probably aggrandized it early. Even when the tide of commerce has been diverted into other channels, its situation has been a source of great profit. A fertile spot, touching upon a track through a desert, it became a mart for caravans, even those which passed, on the pilgrim-route to Mekka, uniting traffic with their religion. Where the five cities are named together as unconquered, Gaza is mentioned first, then Ashdod (^{<0633>}Joshua 13:3). Samson, after he had betrayed his strength, was “brought down to Gaza” (^{<0762>}Judges 16:21), probably as being their strongest fortress, although the furthest from “the valley of Sorek,”^{f150} where he was ensnared. There too was the vast temple of Dagon, which became the burying-place of so many of his worshippers. In Solomon’s reign it was subject to Israel (^{<1021>}1 Kings 4:21). After the Philistine inroad in the time of Ahaz (^{<1438>}2 Chronicles 28:18), and their capture of towns of Judah in the south and the low country, Shephelah, Hezekiah drove them back as far as Gaza (^{<218>}2 Kings 18:8), without apparently taking it. Its prince was defeated by Sargon (Rawlinson, Herodotus, 473. from Cuneif. Inscr.), whose victory over Philistia Isaiah foretold (^{<2349>}Isaiah 14:29). Sennacherib gave to its king, together with those of Ascalon and Ekron (Cuneiform Inscriptions in Layard, Nineveh section B. p. 144), “fortified and other towns which” he “had spoiled,” avowedly to weaken Judah; “so as to make his (Hezekiah’s) country small;” probably also as a reward for hostility to Judah. Greek authors speak of it, as “a very large city of Syria” (Plat. Alex. 25), “a great city” (Arr loc. cit. Mela (i. 11) calls it “large and well fortified”). Like other cities of old, it was, for fear of pirates, built at some distance from the sea (Arrian says “2 1/2 miles”), but had a port called, like that of Asealea (See Reland, p. 530, note 2), Maiuma (literally, “place on the sea” (in Egyptian), Quatremere in Ritt. xvi. 60), which itself too in Christian times became a place of importance (Soz. v. 3).

Because they carried away the whole captivity Literally, “a complete captivity;” complete, but for evil; a captivity in which none were spared, none left behind; old or young, woman or child; but a whole population (whatever its extent) was swept away. Such an inroad of the Philistines is related in the time of Jehoram (^{<216>}2 Chronicles 21:16).

To deliver them up to Edom Literally, “to shut them up to Edom,” in the power of Edom, their bitter enemy, so that they should not be able to escape, nor be restored. The hands, even if not the land, of Edom were

already dyed in the blood of Jacob “their brother” (~~2989~~ Joel 3:19). “Any whither but there,” probably would cry the crowd of helpless captives. It was like driving the shrinking flock of sheep to the butcher’s shambles, reeking with the gore of their companions. Yet therefore were they driven there to the slaughter. Open markets there were for Jewish slaves in abundance. “Sell us, only not to slaughter.” “Spare the greyheaded;” “spare my child;” would go up in the ears of those, who, though enemies, understood their speech. But no! Such was the compact of Tyre and Philistia and Edom against the people of God. Not one was to be spared; it was to be “a complete captivity;” and that, to Edom. The bond was fulfilled.

“Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he too shall cry and shall not be heard” (~~2913~~ Proverbs 21:13).

Joel mentions the like sin of the Philistines and Phoenicians, and foretold its punishment (~~2904~~ Joel 3:4-6). That in the reign of Jehoram is the last which Scripture mentions, but was not therefore, of necessity or probably, the last. Holy Scripture probably relates only the more notable of those border-raids. Unrepented sin is commonly renewed. Those strong Philistine fortresses must have given frequent, abundant opportunity for such inroads; as now too it is said in Arabia, “the harvest is to the stronger;” and while small protected patches of soil in Lebanon, Hauran, etc. are cultivated, the open fertile country often lies uncultivated (See for example, *Five Years in Damascus*. ii. 175), since it would be cultivated only for the marauder. Amos renews the sentence of Joel, forewarning them that, though it seemed to tarry, it would come.

Amos 1:7. *But* Literally, “and.” Thus had Gaza done, and thus would God do; “I will send a fire upon Gaza.” The sentence on Gaza stands out, probably in that it was first in power and in sin. It was the merchant-city of the five; the caravans parted from it or passed through it; and so this sale of the Jewish captives was ultimately effected through them. First in sin, first in punishment. Gaza was strong by nature and by art. “The access to it also,” Arrian notices (l. c.), “lay through deep sand.” We do not hear of its being taken, except in the first times of Israel under the special protection of God (~~2900~~ Judges 1:1,2,18), or by great conquerors. All Philistia, probably, submitted to David; we hear of no special conquest of its towns (~~2900~~ 2 Samuel 8:1). Its siege cost Alexander 2 months (Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 4. Arrian’s description of the siege implies a longer time), with all the aid

of the engines with which he had taken Tyre, and the experience which he had there gained. The Egyptian accounts state, that when besieged by Tothmosis III it capitulated ("He entered this place by combat, by force, and by convention," Karnac Inscr. in Brugsch, p. 96, after Birch). Thenceforth, it had submitted neither to Egypt nor Assyria. Yet Amos declared absolutely, that Gaza should be destroyed by fire, and it was so. Sennacherib first, then, after Jeremiah had foretold anew the destruction of Gaza, Ashkelon, and the Philistines, Pharaoh Necho "smote Gaza" (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 47:1). Yet who, with human foresight only, would undertake to pronounce the destruction of a city so strong?

Amos 1:8. *And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod* Ashdod, as well as Ekron, have their names from their strength; Ashdod, "the mighty," like Valentia; Ekron, "the firm-rooted." The title of Ashdod implied that it was powerful to inflict as to resist. It may have meant, "the waster." It too was eminent in its idolatry. The ark, when taken, was first placed in its Dagon-temple (^{<0900>}1 Samuel 5:1-7); and, perhaps, in consequence, its lord is placed first of the five, in recounting the trespass-offerings which they sent to the Lord (^{<0907>}1 Samuel 6:17). Ashdod (Azotus in the New Testament now a village, Esdud or Shdood (Kinnear, Kairo, etc. p, 214. Ali bey, "Zedoud." Travels, ii. 208. Ritt. xvi. 90)), lay 34 or 36 miles from Gaza (Reland, p. 608. from Itin. Anton. and Hieros. and Diod. Sic.), on the great route from Egypt northward, on that which now too is most used even to Jerusalem. Ashkelon lay to the left of the road, near the sea, rather more than halfway. Ekron (Akir, now a village of 50 mud-houses (Porter, Handbook, 275)), lay a little to the right of the road northward from Gaza to Lydda (in the same latitude as Jamnia, Jabneel) on the road from Ramleh to Belt Jibrin (Eleutheropolis). Ekron, the furthest from the sea, lay only 15 miles from it. They were then a succession of fortresses, strong from their situation, which could molest any army, which should come along their coast. Transversely, in regard to Judah, they enclosed a space parallel to most of Judah and Benjamin. Ekron, which by God's gift was the northern line of Judah (^{<0651>}Joshua 15:11), is about the same latitude as Ramah in Benjamin; Gaza, the same as Carmel (Kurmul). From Gaza lay a straight road to Jerusalem; but Ashkelon too, Ashdod, and Ekron lay near the heads of valleys, which ran up to the hill-country near Jerusalem.^{f151} This system of rich valleys, in which, either by artificial irrigation or natural absorption, the streams which ran from the mountains of Judah westward fertilized the grainfields of Philistia, afforded equally a ready approach to

Philistine marauders into the very heart of Judah. The Crusaders had to crown with castles the heights in a distant circle around Ashkelon,^{f152} in order to restrain the incursions of the Muslims. (In such occasions doubtless, the same man-stealing was often practiced on lesser scales, which here, on a larger scale, draws down the sentence of God. Gath, much further inland, probably formed a center to which these maritime towns converged, and united their system of inroads on Judah.

These five cities of Philistia had each its own petty king (Seren, our “axle”). But all formed one whole; all debated and acted together on any great occasion; as in the plot against Samson (^{<0765>}Judges 16:5,8,18), the sacrifice to Dagon in triumph over him, where they perished (^{<0763>}Judges 16:23,27,30); the inflictions on account of the ark (^{<0888>}1 Samuel 5:8,11; 6:4,12,16,18); the great attack on Israel (^{<0907>}1 Samuel 7:7), which God defeated the Mizpeh; the battle when Saul fell, and the dismissal of David (^{<0882>}1 Samuel 31:2,6,7; ^{<1329>}1 Chronicles 12:19). The cities divided their idolatry also, in a manner, between them, Ashdod being the chief seat of the worship of Dagon (see p. 162), Ashkelon, of the corresponding worship of Derceto (Herodotus, i. 105 Diod. ii. 4), the fish-goddess, the symbol of the passive principle in re-production. Ekron was the seat of the worship of Baalzebub and his oracle, from where he is called “the god of Ekron” (^{<1302>}2 Kings 1:2,3,16). Gaza, even after it had become an abode of Greek idolatry and had seven temples of Greek gods, still retained its worship of its god Marna (“our Lord”) as the chief.^{f153} It too was probably “nature” (See Movers, Phoen. i. pp. 662, 3) and to its worship they were devoted. All these cities were as one; all formed one state; all were one in their sin; all were to be one in their punishment. So then for greater vividness, one part of the common infliction is related of each, while in fact, according to the custom of prophetic diction, what is said of each is said of all. King and people were to be cut off from all; all were to be consumed with fire in war; on all God would, as it were, “turn” (literally, “bring back”) His Hand, visiting them anew, and bringing again the same punishment upon them. In truth these destructions came upon them, again and again, through Sargon, Hezekiah, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, the Maccabees.

Ashdod Uzziah about this time “brake down its walls and built cities about” (^{<1406>}2 Chronicles 26:6) it, to protect his people from its inroads. It recovered, and was subsequently besieged and taken by Tartan, the Assyrian General under Sargon (^{<2301>}Isaiah 20:1) (about 716 B.C.).

Somewhat later, it sustained the longest siege in man's knowledge, for 29 years, from Psammetichus (Herodotus, ii. 157) king of Egypt (about 635 B.C.). Whence, probably Jeremiah, while he speaks of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, mentions "the remnant of Ashdod" (^{<251>}Jeremiah 25:20) only. Yet, after the captivity, it seems to have been the first Philistine city, so that the Philistines were called Ashdodites (^{<107>}Nehemiah 4:7), and their dialect Ashdodite (^{<134>}Nehemiah 13:24). They were still hostile to the Jews (^{<107>}Nehemiah 4:7). The war, in which Judas Maccabaeus spoiled Ashdod and other Philistine cities (1 Macc. 5:68), was a defensive war against a war of extermination. "The nations round about" (1 Macc. 5:1,2), it is said at the beginning of the account of that year's campaign, "thought to destroy the generation of Jacob that was among them, and thereupon they began to slay and destroy the people." Jonathan, the brother of Judas, "set fire to Azotus and the cities round about it (1 Macc. 10:82,84), after a battle under its walls, to which his enemies had challenged him. The temple of Dagon in it was a sort of citadel (1 Macc. 10:83).

Ashkelon is mentioned as a place of strength, taken by the great conqueror, Raamses II. Its resolute defense and capture are represented, with its name as a city of Canaanites, on a monument of Karnac (Brugsch, *Hist. de l'Ég.* p. 146). Its name most naturally signifies "hanging." This suits very well with the site of its present ruins, which "hang" on the side of the theater or arc of hills, whose base is the sea. This, however, probably was not its ancient site (see the note at ^{<1014>}Zephaniah 2:4). Its name occurs in the wars of the Maccabees, but rather as submitting readily (1 Macc. 10:86; 11:60). Perhaps the inhabitants had been changed in the intervening period.

Antipater, the Edomite father of Herod, courted, we are told (Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 1. 3), "the Arabs and the Ascalonites and the Gazites." "Toward the Jews their neighbors, the inhabitants of the Holy land," Philo says (*Leg. ad Cai.* p. 1021. *Rel.* p. 587) to the Roman emperor, "the Ascalonites have an irreconcilable aversion, which will come to no terms." This abiding hatred (Josephus, *B.J.* iii. 2. 2) burst out at the beginning of the war with the Romans, in which Jerusalem perished. The Ascalonites massacred 2500 Jews dwelling among them (*Ibid.* ii. 18.5). The Jews "fired Ascalon and utterly destroyed Gaza" (*Ibid.* I. This occurred first, unless the account be a summary).

Ekron was apparently not important enough in itself to have any separate history. We hear of it only as given by Alexander Bales "with the borders thereof in possession" (1 Macc. 10:89) to Jonathan the Maccabee. The

valley of Surar gave the Ekronites a readier entrance into the center of Judaea, than Ascalon or Ashdod had. In Jerome's time, it had sunk to "a very large village."

The residue of the Philistines shall perish This has been thought to mean "the rest" (as in ^{<393B>}Jeremiah 39:3; ^{<4072>}Nehemiah 7:72) that is, Gath, (not mentioned by name anymore as having ceased to be of any account (see the note at ^{<308B>}Amos 6:3)) and the towns, dependent on those chief cities (So Jerome, Theod.). The common (and, with a proper name, universal^{f154}) meaning of the idiom is, "the remnant," those who remain over after a first destruction. The words then, like those just before, "I will bring again my hand against Ekron," foretell a renewal of those first judgments. The political strength which should survive one desolation should be destroyed in those which should succeed it. In tacit contrast with the promises of mercy to the remnant of Judah (see above the note at ^{<3072>}Joel 2:32), Amos foretells that judgment after judgment should fall upon Philistia, until the Philistines ceased to be anymore a people; as they did.

Amos 1:9. The last crowning sin, for which judgment is pronounced on Tyre, is the same as that of Philistia, and probably was enacted in concert with it. In Tyre, there was this aggravation, that it was a violation of a previous treaty and friendship. It was not a covenant only, nor previous friendliness only; but a specific covenant, founded on friendship which they forgot and brake. If they retained the memory of Hiram's contact with David and Solomon, it was a sin against light too. After David had expelled the Jebusites from Jerusalem,

"Hiram King of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees and carpenters and masons; and they built David a house" (^{<4051>}2 Samuel 5:11).

The Philistines contrariwise invaded him (^{<4057>}2 Samuel 5:17). This recognition of him by Hiram was to David a proof,

"that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for His people, Israel's sake" (^{<4052>}2 Samuel 5:12).

Hiram seems, then, to have recognized something super-human in the exaltation of David. "Hiram was ever a lover of David" (^{<4080>}1 Kings 5:1). This friendship he continued to Solomon, and recognized his God as "the"

God. Scripture embodies the letter of Hiram; “Because the Lord hath loved his people, He hath made thee king over them. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David a wise son — that he might build a house for the Lord” (^{<421>}2 Chronicles 2:11. Hiram answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon). He must have known then the value which the pious Israelites attached to the going up to that temple. A later treaty, offered by Demetrius Nicator to Jonathan, makes detailed provision that the Jews should have (1 Macc. 10:34; Josephus, Ant. xiii. 2, 3) “the feasts and sabbaths and new moons and the solemn days and the three days before the feast and the three days after the feast, as days of immunity and freedom.” The three days before the feast were given, that they might go up to the feast. Other treaties guarantee to the Jews religious privileges (1 Macc. 11:34. Josephus, Ant. xiii. 4, 9. renewed to Simon, 1 Macc. 13:35-40). A treaty between Solomon and Hiram, which should not secure any religious privileges needed by Jews in Hiram’s dominion, is inconceivable. But Jews were living among the Zidonians (see the note at ^{<206>}Joel 3:6). The treaty also, made between Hiram and Solomon, was subsequent to the arrangement by which Hiram was to supply cedars to Solomon, and Solomon to furnish the grain of which Hiram stood in need (^{<107>}1 Kings 5:7-11). “The Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as He promised him” (^{<152>}1 Kings 5:12); and, as a fruit of that wisdom, “there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a covenant.” The terms of that covenant are not there mentioned; but a covenant involves conditions. it was not a mere peace; but a distinct covenant, sanctioned by religious rites and by sacrifice. “This brotherly covenant Tyre remembered not,” when they delivered up to Edom “a complete captivity,” all the Jews who came into their hands. It seems then, that that covenant had an special provision against selling them away from their own land. This same provision other people made^{f155} for love of their country or their homes; the Jews, for love of their religion. This covenant Tyre remembered not, but broke. They knew doubtless why Edom sought to possess the Israelites; but the covetousness of Tyre fed the cruelty of Edom, and God punished the broken appeal to Himself.

^{<300>}**Amos 1:10.** *I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre* Tyre had long ere this become tributary to Assyria. Asshur-ban-ipal (about 930 B.C.,) records his “taking tribute from the kings of all the chief Phoenician cities as Tyre, Sidon, Biblus and Aradus” (Rawlinson, Herodotus, T. i. Ess. vii. Section 11. from Cuneiform Inser.). His son Shalmanubar records his

taking tribute from them in his 21st year (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* Section 14. p. 463) about 880, B.C.), as did Ivalush III (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* Section 19. p. 467), and after this time Tiglath-pileser II (Rawlinson, Section 22. p. 470), the same who took Damascus and carried off its people, as also the east and north of Israel. The Phoenicians had aided Benhadad, in his unsuccessful war or rebellion against Shalmanubar (Rawlinson, Section 15. p. 464), but their city had received no hurt. There was nothing, in the time of Amos, to indicate any change of policy in the Assyrian conquerors. They had been content hitherto with tribute from their distant dependencies; they had spared them, even when in arms against them. Yet Amos says absolutely in the name of God, “I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre,” and the fire did fall, first from Shalmaneser or Sargon his successor, and then from Nebuchadnezzar. The Tyrians (as is men’s custom) inserted in their annals their successes, or the successful resistance which they made for a time. They relate that (Meander in Josephus, *Ant.* ix. 14. 2), “Elulæus, king of Tyre, reduced the Kittiaens (Cypriotes) who had revolted. The king of Assyria invaded all Phoenicia, and returned, having made peace with all. Sidon and Ace and old Tyre, and many other cities revolted from the Tyrians, and surrendered to the king of Assyria. Tyre then not obeying, the king returned against them, the Phoenicians manning 60 ships for him.” These, he says, were dispersed, 500 prisoners taken; the honor of Tyre intensified. “The king of Assyria, removing, set guards at the river and aqueducts, to hinder the Tyrians from drawing water. This they endured for 5 years, drinking from the wells sunk.” The Tyrian annalist does not relate the sequel. He does not venture to say that the Assyrian King gave up the siege, but, having made the most of their resistance, breaks off the account. The Assyrian inscriptions say, that Sargon took Tyre (Rawlinson, Section 24. p. 474), and received tribute from Cyprus, where a monument has been found, bearing the name of Sargon (“The statue of Sargon, now in the Berlin Museum, brought from Idalium, commemorates the Cyprian expedition” Rawlinson, *Ibid.*). It is not probable that a monarch who took Samaria and Ashdod, received tribute from Egypt, the “Chief of Saba,” and “Queen of the Arabs,” overran Hamath, Tubal, Cilicia, Armenia, reduced Media, should have returned baffled, because Tyre stood out a blockade for 5 years. Since Sargon wrested from Tyre its newly-recovered Cyprus, its insular situation would not have protected itself. Nebuchadnezzar took it after a 13 years’ siege (~~2317~~ Ezekiel 26:7-12, see the notes at Isaiah 23).

Amos 1:11. *Edom* God had impressed on Israel its relation of brotherhood to Edom. Moses expressed it to Edom himself (^{<0044>}Numbers 20:14, thus saith thy brother Israel), and, after the suspicious refusal of Edom to allow Israel to march on the highway through his territory, he speaks as kindly of him, as before;

“And when we passed by from our brethren, the children of Esau” (^{<0018>}Deuteronomy 2:8).

It was the unkindness of worldly politics, and was forgiven. The religious love of the Egyptian and the Edomite was, on distinct grounds, made part of the law.

“Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land” (^{<0217>}Deuteronomy 23:7).

The grandchild of an Egyptian or of an Edomite was religiously to become as an Israelite (^{<0218>}Deuteronomy 23:8). Not a foot of Edomite territory was Israel to appropriate, however provoked. It was God’s gift to Edom, as much as Canaan to Israel.

“They shall be afraid of you, and ye shall take exceeding heed to yourselves. Quarrel not with them, for I will give you, of their land, no, not so much as the treading of the sole of the foot, for I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession” (^{<0045>}Deuteronomy 2:4,5).

From this time until that of Saul, there is no mention of Edom; only that the Maonites and the Amalekites, who oppressed Israel (^{<0018>}Judges 6:3; 10:12), were kindred tribes with Edom. The increasing strength of Israel in the early days of Saul seems to have occasioned a conspiracy against him, such as Asaph afterward complains of;

“They have said, come and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent, they are confederate against Thee; the tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites; of Moab and the Hagarenes; Gebal and Ammon and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them; they have been an arm to the children of Lot” (^{<0874>}Psalms 83:4-8).

Such a combination began probably in the time of Saul.

“He fought against all his enemies on every side; against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against the king of Edom, and against the Philistines” (^{<0144>}1 Samuel 14:47).

They were “his enemies,” and that, round about, encircling Israel, as hunters did their prey. “Edom,” on the south and southeast; “Moab” and “Ammon” on the east; the Syrians of “Zobah” on the north; the Philistines on the west enclosed him as in a net, and he repulsed them one by one.

“Whichever way he turned, he worsted” them. It follows “he delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them” (^{<0148>}1 Samuel 14:48).

The aggression was from Edom, and that in combination with old oppressors of Israel, not from Saul (as has often been carelessly assumed). The wars of Saul and of David were defensive wars. Israel was recovering from a state of depression, not oppressing. “The valley of salt” (^{<1083>}2 Samuel 8:13), where David defeated the Edomites, was also doubtless within the borders of Judah, since “the city of salt” was (^{<0152>}Joshua 15:62); and the valley of salt was probably near the remarkable “mountain of salt,” 5 5/6 miles long, near the end of the Dead Sea (Robinson, ii. 108,109), which, as being Canaanite, belonged to Israel. It was also far north of Kadesh, which was “the utmost boundary” of Edom (^{<0316>}Numbers 20:16). From that Psalm too of mingled thanksgiving and prayer which David composed after the victory, “in the valley of salt” (Psalm 60 title), it appears that, even after that victory, David’s army had not yet entered Edom.

“Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?” (^{<0319>}Psalm 60:9).

That same Psalm speaks of grievous suffering before, “in” which God had “cast” them “off” and “scattered” them; “made the earth tremble and cleft it;” so that “it reeled” (^{<0311>}Psalm 60:1-3,10). Joab too had “returned” from the war in the north against the Syrians of Mesopotamia, to meet the Edomites. Whether in alliance with the Syrians, or taking advantage of the absence of the main army there, the Edomites had inflicted some heavy blow on Israel; a battle in which Abishai killed 18,000 men (^{<1382>}1 Chronicles 18:12) had been indecisive. The Edomites were repulsed by the rapid counter-march of Joab. The victory, according to the Psalm, was still

incomplete (~~<1381>~~1 Chronicles 18:1,5,9-12). David put “garrisons in Edom” (~~<1084>~~2 Samuel 8:14), to restrain them from further outbreaks. Joab avenged the wrong of the Edomites, conformably to his character (~~<1116>~~1 Kings 11:16); but the fact that “the captain of the host” had “to go up to bury the slain” (~~<1115>~~1 Kings 11:15. It should be rendered, not, after he had slain, but, and he killed, etc.), shows the extent of the deadly blow, which he so fearfully avenged.

The store set by the king of Egypt on Hadad, the Edomite prince who fled to him (~~<1114>~~1 Kings 11:14-20), shows how gladly Egypt employed Edom as an enemy to Israel. It has been said that he rebelled and failed (Josephus, Ant. viii. 7. 6). Else it remained under a dependent king appointed by Judah, for 1 1/2 century (~~<1247>~~1 Kings 22:47; ~~<1211>~~2 Kings 3:9ff). One attempt against Judah is recorded (~~<1400>~~2 Chronicles 20:10), when those of Mount Seir combined with Moab and Ammon against Jehoshaphat after his defeat at Ramoth-gilead. They had penetrated beyond Engedi (~~<1402>~~2 Chronicles 20:2,16,20), on the road which Arab marauders take now (Robinson, i. 508), toward the wilderness of Tekoa, when God set them against one another, and they fell by each other’s hands (~~<1402>~~2 Chronicles 20:22-24). But Jehoshaphat’s prayer at this time evinces that Israel’s had been a defensive warfare. Otherwise, he could not have appealed to God,

“the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom Thou wouldest not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not, behold, they reward us, to come to cast us out of Thy possession, which Thou hast given us to inherit” (~~<1400>~~2 Chronicles 20:10,11).

Judah held Edom by aid of garrisons, as a wild beast is held in a cage, that they might not injure them, but had taken no land from them, nor expelled them. Edom sought to cast Israel out of God’s land. Revolts cannot be without bloodshed; and so it is perhaps the more probable, that the words of Joel,

“for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land” (~~<2089>~~Joel 3:19),

relate to a massacre of the Jews, when Esau revolted from Jehoram (~~<1180>~~2 Kings 8:20-22). We have seen, in the Indian Massacres, how every living being of the ruling power may, on such occasions, be sought out for destruction. Edom gained its independence, and Jehoram, who sought to

recover his authority, escaped with his life by cutting through the Edomite army by night (^{<1382>}2 Kings 8:21). Yet in Amaziah's time they were still on the offensive, since the battle wherein he defeated them, was again "in the valley of salt" (^{<1247>}2 Kings 14:7; ^{<1251>}2 Chronicles 25:11,14). Azariah, in whose reign Amos prophesied, regained Elath from them, the port for the Indian trade (^{<1482>}2 Chronicles 26:2). Of the origin of that war, we know nothing; only the brief words as to the Edomite invasion against Ahaz,

"and yet again had the Edomites come, and smitten in Judah, and carried captive a captivity" (^{<1487>}2 Chronicles 28:17),

attest previous and, it may be, habitual invasions. For no one such invasion had been named. It may probably mean, "they did yet again, what they had been in the habit of doing." But in matter of history, the prophets, in declaring the grounds of God's judgments, supply much which it was not the object of the historical books to relate. "They" are histories of God's dealings with His people, His chastisements of them or of His sinful instruments in chastising them. Rarely, except when His supremacy was directly challenged, do they record the ground of the chastisements of pagan nations. Hence, to those who look on the surface only, the wars of the neighboring nations against Israel look but like the alternations of peace and war, victory and defeat, in modern times. The prophets draw up the veil, and show us the secret grounds of man's misdeeds and God's judgments.

Because he did pursue his brother The characteristic sin of Edom, and its punishment are one main subject of the prophecy of Obadiah, inveterate malice contrary to the law of kindred. Eleven hundred years had passed since the birth of their forefathers, Jacob and Esau. But, with God, eleven hundred years had not worn out kindred. He who willed to knit together all creation, human beings and angels, in one in Christ (^{<4010>}Ephesians 1:10), and, as a means of union,

"made of one blood all nations of people for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (^{<4172>}Acts 17:26),

used all sorts of ways to impress this idea of brotherhood. "We" forget relationship mostly in the third generation, often sooner; and we think it strange when a nation long retains the memories of those relationships (as the Scotch). God, in His law, stamped on His people's minds those wider meanings. To slay a man was to slay a "brother" (^{<4095>}Genesis 9:5). Even

the outcast Canaan was a brother (^{<0025>}Genesis 9:25) to Shem and Ham. Lot speaks to the men of Sodom amidst their iniquities, “my brethren” (^{<0197>}Genesis 19:7); Jacob so salutes those unknown to him (^{<0204>}Genesis 29:4). The descendants of Ishmael and Isaac were to be brethren; so were those of Esau and Jacob (^{<0162>}Genesis 16:12; 25:18). The brotherhood of blood was not to wear out, and there was to be a brotherhood of love also (^{<0272>}Genesis 27:29,37). Every Israelite was a brother (^{<0121>}Exodus 2:11; 4:18; the king and his people, ^{<0170>}Deuteronomy 17:20; ^{<1382>}1 Chronicles 28:2); each tribe was a brother to every other (^{<0509>}Deuteronomy 10:9; 18:2; ^{<0713>}Judges 20:23,28); the force of the appeal was remembered, even when passion ran high (^{<0125>}2 Samuel 2:26). It enters habitually into the divine legislation. “Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother (^{<0511>}Deuteronomy 15:11); if thy brother, a” Hebrew, sell himself to thee (^{<0512>}Deuteronomy 15:12); thou shalt not see thy brother’s ox or his sheep go astray and hide thyself from them (^{<0521>}Deuteronomy 22:1-4); if thy brother be waxen poor, then shalt thou relieve him, though a stranger and a sojourner, that he may live with thee” (^{<0255>}Leviticus 25:35-39; add ^{<0197>}Leviticus 19:17; ^{<0247>}Deuteronomy 24:7,10,14). In that same law, Edom’s relationship as a brother was acknowledged. It was an abiding law that Israel was not to take land, nor to refuse to admit him into the congregation of the Lord. Edom too remembered the relation, but to hate him. The nations around Israel seem to have been little at war with one another, bound together by common hatred against God’s people. Of their wars indeed we should not hear, for they had no religious interest. They would be but the natural results of the passions of unregenerate nature. Feuds there doubtless were and forays, but no attempts at permanent conquest or subdual. Their towns remain in their own possession (On Moab and Edom see the note at ^{<0101>}Amos 2:1). Tyre does not invade Philistia; nor Philistia, Tyre or Edom. But all combine against Israel. The words, “did pursue his brother with the sword,” express more than is mentioned in the historical books. To “pursue” is more than to fight. They followed after, in order to destroy a remnant, “and cast off all pity:” literally, and more strongly, “corrupted his compassions, tenderesses.” Edom did violence to his natural feelings, as Ezekiel, using the same word, says of Tyre, “corrupting (^{<0287>}Ezekiel 28:17) his wisdom,” that is, perverting it from the end for which God gave it, and so destroying it. Edom “stealed himself,” as we say, against his better feelings,” his better nature,” “deadened” them. But so they do not live again. Man is not master of the life and death of his feelings, anymore than of his natural existence.

He can destroy; he cannot re-create. And he does, so far, “corrupt,” decay, do to death, his own feelings, whenever, in any signal instance, he acts against them. Edom was not simply unfeeling. He destroyed all “his tender yearnings” over suffering, such as God has put into every human heart, until it destroys them. Ordinary anger is satisfied and slaked by its indulgence; malice is fomented and fed and invigorated by it. Edom ever, as occasion gratified his anger; “his anger did tear continually;” yet, though raging as some wild ravening animal, without control, “he kept his wrath for ever,” not within bounds, but to let it loose anew. He retained it when he ought to have parted with it, and let it loose when he ought to have restrained it.

“What is best, when spoiled, becomes the worst,” is proverbial truth. (F. Petrarch. Dial. ii. 45. Bas. 1554. Lap.): “As no love wellnigh is more faithful than that of brothers, so no hatred, when it hath once begun, is more unjust, no odium fiercer. Equality stirs up and inflames the mind; the shame of giving way and the love of preeminence is the more inflamed, in that the memory of infancy and whatever else would seem to gender good will, when once they are turned aside from the right path, produce hatred and contempt.” They were proverbial sayings of paganism, “fierce are the wars of brethren” (in Aristotle, Pol. vii. 7. Lap.), and “they who have loved exceedingly, they too hate exceedingly.” (Plut. de frat. amore. Ibid.):

“The Antiochi, the Seleuci, the Gryphi, the Cyziceni, when they learned not to be all but brothers, but craved the purple and diadems, overwhelmed themselves and Asia too with many calamities.”

~~<000>~~ **Amos 1:12.** *But* (And I, in My turn and as a consequence of these sins) *will send a fire upon Teman* “Teman,” say Eusebius and Jerome (de locis Hebr.), “was a country of the princes of Edom, which had its name from Teman son of Eliphaz, son of Esau (~~<0331>~~Genesis 36:11,15). But even to this day there is a village, called Teman, about 5 (Eusebius says 15) miles from Petra, where there is also a Roman garrison, from which place was Eliphaz, king of the Themanites.” It is, however, probably the district which is meant, of which Bozra was then the capital. For Amos when speaking of cities, uses some word to express this, as “the palaces of Benhadad, the wall of Gaza, of Tyrus, of Rabbah;” here he simply uses the name Teman, as he does those of Moab and Judah. Amos does not mention Petra, or Selah, for Amaziah had taken it, and called it Joktheel,

“which God subdued,” which name it for some time retained (~~2 Kings~~ 2 Kings 14:7).

Bozrah (Literally, which cuts off approach) is mentioned, as early as Genesis (~~36:33~~ Genesis 36:33), as the seat of one of the elective kings who, in times before Moses, reigned over Edom. It lay then doubtless in Idumea itself, and is quite distinct from the Bozrah of Hauran or Auranitis, from which Jerome also distinguishes it. (de locis Hebr.):

“There is another Bosor also, a city of Esau, in the mountains of Idumea, of which Isaiah speaks.”

There is yet a small village of the like name (Busaira “the little Bozrah”) which “appears,” it is said (Burckhardt, Syria, 407),

“to have been in ancient times a considerable city, if we may judge from the ruins which surround the village.”

It has now “some 50 houses, and stands on an elevation, on the summit of which a small castle has been built.” The name however, “little Bozrah,” indicates the existence of a “great Bozrah,” with which its name is contrasted, and is not likely to have been the place itself (as has been assumed since Robinson, ii. 167). Probably the name was a common one, “the strong place” of its neighborhood.

The Bozrah of Edom is either that little vilage, or is wholly blotted out.

~~Amos~~ **Amos 1:13.** *Ammon* These who receive their existence under circumstances, in any way like those of the first forefathers of Moab and Ammon, are known to be under physical as well as intellectual and moral disadvantages. Apart from the worst horrors, on the one side reason was stupefied, on the other it was active in sin. He who imprinted His laws on nature, has annexed the penalty to the infraction of those laws. It is known also how, even under the Gospel, the main character of a nation remains unchanged. The basis of natural character, upon which grace has to act, remains, under certain limits, the same. Still more in the unchanging east. Slave-dealers know of certain hereditary good or evil qualities in non-Christian nations in whom they traffic. What marvel then that Ammon and Moab retained the stamp of their origin, in a sensual or passionate nature? Their choice of their idols grew out of this original character and aggravated it. They chose them gods like themselves, and worsened themselves by copying these idols of their sinful nature. The chief god of

the fierce Ammon was Milehem or Molech, the principle of destruction, who was appeased with sacrifices of living children, given to the fire to devour. Moab, beside its idol Chemosh, had the degrading worship of Baal Peor (⁽⁴²⁵¹⁾Numbers 25:1-3), reproductiveness the counterpart of destruction. And, so, in fierce or degrading rites, they worshiped the power which belongs to God, to create, or to destroy. Moab was the seducer of Israel at Shittim (⁽⁴²⁵¹⁾Numbers 25:1-3). Ammon, it has been noticed, showed at different times a special wanton ferocity (Grote in Smith's Bible Dictionary, "Ammon"). Such was the proposal of Nahash to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, when offering to surrender, "that I may thrust out all your right eyes and lay it for a reproach unto all Israel" (⁽⁴⁹¹⁰⁾1 Samuel 11:1-3). Such was the insult to David's messengers of peace, and the hiring of the Syrians in an aggressive war against David (⁽⁴⁰⁰¹⁾2 Samuel 10:1-6). Such, again, was this war of extermination against the Gileadites. On Israel's side, the relation to Moab and Ammon had been altogether friendly. God recalled to Israel the memory of their common descent, and forbade them to war against either. He speaks of them by the name of kindness, "the children of Lot," the companion and friend of Abraham.

"I will not give thee of their land for a possession, because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession"
(⁽⁴¹¹¹⁾Deuteronomy 2:9,19).

Akin by descent, their history had been alike. Each had driven out a giant tribe; Moab, the Emim; Ammon, the Zamzummim (⁽⁴¹²¹⁾Deuteronomy 2:10,11,20,21). They had thus possessed themselves of the tract from the Arnon, not quite half way down the Dead Sea on its east side, to the Jabbok, about half-way between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee.^{f157}

Both had been expelled by the Amorites, and had been driven, Moab, behind the Arnon, Ammon, behind the "strong border" (⁽⁴²¹²⁾Numbers 21:24) of the upper part of the Jabbok, what is now the Nahr Amman, "the river of Ammon," eastward. The whole of what became the inheritance of the 2 1/2 tribes, was in the hands of the Amorites, and threatened very nearly their remaining possessions; since, at "Aroer that is before Rabbah" (⁽⁴¹³⁵⁾Joshua 13:25), the Amorites were already over against the capital of Ammon; at the Arnon they were but 2 1/2 hours (Porter, Handbook, 302) from Ar-Moab, the remaining capital of Moab. Israel then, in destroying the Amorites, had been at once avenging and rescuing Moab and Ammon; and it is so far a token of friendliness at this time, that, after the victory at

Edrei, the great “iron bedstead” of Og was placed in “Rabbah of the children of Ammon” (^{<0881>}Deuteronomy 3:11). Envy, jealousy, and fear, united them to “hire Balaam to curse Israel” (^{<0620>}Deuteronomy 23:4), although the king of Moab was the chief actor in this (Numbers 22—24), as he was in the seduction of Israel to idolatry (^{<0425>}Numbers 25:1-3). Probably Moab was then, and continued to be, the more influential or the more powerful, since in their first invasion of Israel, the Ammonites came as the allies of Eglon king of Moab. “He gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek (^{<0703>}Judges 3:13). And” they “served Eglon.” Yet Ammon’s subsequent oppression must have been yet more grievous, since God reminds Israel of His delivering them from the Ammonites (^{<0701>}Judges 10:11), not from Moab. There we find Ammon under a king, and in league with the Philistines (^{<0703>}Judges 10:7), “crashing and crushing (^{<0708>}Judges 10:8. The two alliterate and equivalent words are joined as intensive) for 18 years all the children of Israel in Gilead.” The Ammonites carried a wide invasion across the Jordan against Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim (^{<0709>}Judges 10:9), until they were subdued by Jephthah. Moab is not named; but the king of Ammon claims as my land (^{<0713>}Judges 11:13), the whole which Moab and Ammon had lost to the Amorites and they to Israel, “from Arnon unto Jabbok and unto Jordan” (^{<0713>}Judges 11:13). The range also of Jephthah’s victories included probably all that same country from the Arnon to the neighborhood of Rabbah of Ammon.^{f158} The Ammonites, subdued then, were again on the offensive in the fierce siege of Jabesh-Gilead and against Saul (see above the note at ^{<0100>}Amos 1:11). Yet it seems that they had already taken from Israel what they had lost to the Amorites, for Jabesh-Gilead was beyond the Jabbok;^{f159} and “Mizpeh of Moab,” where David went to seek the king of Moab (^{<0223>}1 Samuel 22:3), was probably no other than the Ramoth-Mizpeh (^{<0633>}Joshua 13:26) of Gad, the Mizpeh (^{<0713>}Judges 11:29) from where Jephthah went over to fight the Ammonites. With Hanan, king of Ammon, David sought to remain at peace, on account of some kindness, interested as it probably was, which his father Nahash had shown him, when persecuted by Saul (^{<0102>}2 Samuel 10:2). It was only after repeated attempts to bring an overwhelming force of the Syrians against David, that Rabbah was besieged and taken, and that awful punishment inflicted. The severity of the punishment inflicted on Moab and Ammon, in that two-thirds of the fighting men of Moab were put to death (^{<0102>}2 Samuel 8:2), and fighting men of “the cities of Ammon” (^{<0123>}2 Samuel 12:31) were destroyed by a ghastly death, so different from David’s treatment of the Philistines or the

various Syrians, implies some extreme hostility on their part, from which there was no safety except in their destruction. Moab and Ammon were still united against Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20), and with Nebuchadnezzar against Jehoiakim (^{<1240>}2 Kings 24:2), whom they had before sought to stir up against the king of Babylon (^{<1278>}Jeremiah 27:3). Both profited for a time by the distresses of Israel, “magnifying” themselves “against her border” (^{<1308>}Zephaniah 2:8), and taking possession of her cities,^{f160} out of jealousy against its religious distinction. When some of the scattered Jews were reunited under Gedaliah, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, it was a king of Ammon, Baalis, who instigated Johanan to murder him (^{<1401>}Jeremiah 40:11-14; 41:10). When Jerusalem was to be rebuilt after the return from the captivity, Ammonites and Moabites (^{<1420>}Nehemiah 2:10,19; 4:1-3), “Sanballat the Horonite” (that is, out of Horonaim, which Moab had taken to itself (^{<1356>}Isaiah 15:5; ^{<1418>}Jeremiah 48:3,5,34.)) “and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite,” were chief in the opposition to it. They helped on the persecution by Antiochus (1 Macc. 5:6). Their anti-religious character, which showed itself in the hatred of Israel and the hire of Balaam, was the ground of the exclusion of both from admission “into the congregation of the Lord forever” (^{<1428>}Deuteronomy 23:3). The seduction of Solomon by his Ammonite and Moabite wives illustrates the infectiousness of their idolatry. While he made private chapels “for all his strange wives, to burn incense and sacrifice to their gods” (^{<1108>}1 Kings 11:8), the most stately idolatry was that of Chemosh and Molech, the abomination of Moab and Ammon.^{f161} For Ashtoreth alone, besides these, did Solomon build high places in sight of the temple of God, on a lower part of the Mount of Olives (^{<1233>}2 Kings 23:13).

They have ripped up the women with child in Gilead Since Elisha prophesied that Hazael would be guilty of this same atrocity, and since Gilead was the scene of his chief atrocities (Ab. 3), probably Syria and Ammon were, as of old, united against Israel in a war of extermination. It was a conspiracy to displace God’s people from the land which He had given them, and themselves to replace them. The plan was effective; it was, Amos says, executed. They expelled and “inherited Gad” (^{<1401>}Jeremiah 49:1). Gilead was desolated for the sins for which Hosea rebuked it; “blood had blood.” It had been “tracked with blood” (see the note at ^{<1388>}Hosea 6:8. p. 42); now life was sought out for destruction, even in the mother’s

womb. But, in the end, Israel, whose extermination Ammon devised and in part effected, survived. Ammon perished and left no memorial.

That they might enlarge their border It was a horror, then, exercised, not incidentally here and there, or upon a few, or in sudden stress of passion, but upon system and in cold blood. We have seen lately, in the massacres near Lebanon, where male children were murdered on system, how methodically such savageness goes to work. A massacre, here and there, would not have “enlarged their border.” They must have carried on these horrors then, throughout all the lands which they wished to possess, making place for themselves by annihilating Israel, that there might be none to rise up and thrust them from their conquests, and claim their old inheritance. Such was the fruit of habitually indulged covetousness. Yet who beforehand would have thought it possible?

Amos 1:14. *I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah* Rabbah, literally, “the great,” called by Moses “Rabbah of the children of Ammon” (^(Rab)Deuteronomy 3:11), and by later Greeks, “Rabathammana” (Polyb. v. 71. 4. Steph. Byz.), was a strong city with a yet stronger citadel. Ruins still exist, some of which probably date back to these times. The lower city (Burckhardt, Syria, 358, 8) “lay in a valley bordered on both sides by barren hills of flint,” at 1/2 an hour from its entrance. It lay on a stream, still called by its name Moyet or Nahr Amman, “waters” or “river of Ammon,” which ultimately falls into the Zurka (the Jabbok) (Ibid. 359. 60. and see plan p. 357). “On the top of the highest of the northern hills,” where at the divergence of two valleys it abuts upon the ruins of the town, “stands the castle of Ammon, a very extensive rectangular building,” following the shape of the hill and wholly occupying its crest. “Its walls are thick, and denote a remote antiquity; large blocks of stone are piled up without cement, and still hold together as well as if they had been recently placed; the greater part of the wall is entire. Within the castle are several deep cisterns.” There are remains of foundations of a wall of the lower city at its eastern extremity (Buckingham, Trav. Ritter, xv. 1150). This lower city, as lying on a river in a waterless district, was called the “city of waters” (^(Joab)2 Samuel 12:27), which Joab had taken when he sent to David to come and besiege the Upper City. In later times, that Upper City was resolutely defended against Antiochus the Great, and taken, not by force but by thirst (Polyb. l.c. A prisoner showed how the access of the garrison to the water might be cut off). On a conspicuous place on this castle-hill, stood a large temple, some of its broken columns 3 1/2 feet in diameter

(Burckhardt, 360), probably the Grecian successor of the temple of its idol Milchom. Rabbah, the capital of Ammon, cannot have escaped, when Nebuchadnezzar (Josephus, Ant. x. 9. 7),

“in the 5th year of his reign, led an army against Coele-Syria, and, having possessed himself of it, warred against the Ammonites and Moabites, and having made all these nations subject to him, invaded Egypt, to subdue it.”

Afterward, it was tossed to and fro in the desolating wars between Syria and Egypt. Ptolemy II called it from his own surname Philadelphia (Jerome in Ezekiel 25), and so probably had had to restore it. It brought upon itself the attack of Antiochus III and its own capture, by its old habit of marauding against the Arabs in alliance with him. At the time of our Lord, it, with “Samaria, Galilee and Jericho,” is said by a pagan (Strabo, xvi. 2. 34; Ritt. 1156) to be “inhabited by a mingled race of Egyptians, Arabians and Phoenicians.” It had probably already been given over to “the children of the East,” the Arabs, as Ezekiel had foretold (²⁶²⁰⁴Ezekiel 25:4). In early Christian times Milchom was still worshiped there under its Greek name of Hercules (Coins from Trajan to Commodus, see authorities, Ritt. 1157). Trajan recovered it to the Roman empire (Amm. xiv. 8.13), and in the 4th century it, with Bostra (“and Gerasa,” Ibid.), was still accounted a “vast town most secured by strong walls,” as a frontier fortress “to repel the incursions of neighboring nations.” It was counted to belong to Arabia (Epiph. Synops. L. it. adv. Haer. p. 397. Anaceph. p. 145. Reland, 612). An Arabic writer says that it perished before the times of Muhammed, and covered a large tract with its ruins.^{f162} It became a station of pilgrims to Mecca, and then, until now, as Ezekiel foretold,^{f163} a stable for camels and a couching place.

I will kindle a fire in the wall It may be that the prophet means to speak of some conflagration from within, in that he says not, as elsewhere, “I will send afire upon,” but, “I will kindle a fire in” (Amos 1:4,7,10,12; 2:2,5). But “the shouting” is the battle-cry (¹⁸³²⁵Job 39:25; ²⁰¹⁶Jeremiah 20:16; ³⁰¹⁶Zephaniah 1:16, etc.) of the victorious enemy, the cheer of exultation, anticipating its capture. That onslaught was to be resistless, sweeping, like a whirlwind, all before it. The fortress and walls of Rabbah were to yield before the onset of the enemy, as the tents of their caravans were whirled flat on the ground before the eddying of the whirlwinds from the desert, burying all beneath them.

~~3000~~ **Amos 1:15.** *And their king* The king was commonly, in those nations, the center of their energy. When “he and his princes” were “gone into captivity,” there was no one to make head against the conqueror, and renew revolts. Hence, as a first step in the subdual, the reigning head and those who shared his counsels were removed. Ammon then, savage as it was in act, was no ill-organized horde. On the contrary, barren and waste as all that country now is, it must once have been highly cultivated by a settled and laborious people. The abundance of its ruins attests the industry and habits of the population. “The whole of the country,” says Burckhardt (Syria, 357. (See also Porter. Handbook, 307)), “must have been extremely well cultivated, to have afforded subsistence to the inhabitants of so many towns.” “The low hills are, for the most part, crowned with ruins.” Of the^{f164} “thirty ruined or deserted places, which including Amman,” have been even lately “counted east of Assalt” (the village which probably represents Ramoth-Gilead, “about 16 miles west of Philadelphia^{f165} several are in Ammonitis. Little as the country has been explored, ruins of large and important towns have been found south-southeast. and south of Amman (Buckingham, p. 83-96). Two hours southeast of Amman, Buckingham relates (Ibid. 85), “an elevation opened a new view before us, in the same direction. On a little lower level, was a still more extensive track of cultivated plain than that even which we had already passed — Throughout its whole extent were seen ruined towns in every direction, both before, behind, and on each side of us; generally seated on small eminences; all at a short distance from each other; and all, as far as we had yet seen, bearing evident marks of former opulency and consideration. There was not a tree in sight as far as the eye could reach; but my guide, who had been over every part of it, assured me that the whole of the plain was covered with the finest soil, and capable of being made the most productive grain-land in the world — For a space of more than thirty miles there did not appear to me a single interruption of hill, rock or wood, to impede immediate tillage. The great plain of Esdraelon, so justly celebrated for its extent and fertility, is inferior in both to this plain of Belkah. Like Esdraelon, it appears to have been once the seat of an active and numerous population; but in the former the monuments of the dead only remain, while here the habitations of the living are equally mingled with the tombs of the departed, all thickly strewn over every part of the soil from which they drew their sustenance.” Nor does the crown, of a “talent of gold weight, with precious stones” (~~3020~~ 2 Samuel 12:30), belong to an uncivilized people. Such hordes too depend on the will and guidance of

their single Skeikh or head. This was a hereditary kingdom (~~3000~~2 Samuel 10:1). The kings of Ammon had their constitutional advisers. These were they who gave the evil and destructive counsel to insult the ambassadors of David. Evil kings have evermore evil counselors. It is ever the curse of such kings to have their own evil, reflected, anticipated, fomented, enacted by bad advisers around them. “Hand in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished” (~~3012~~Proverbs 11:21). They link together, but to drag one another into a common destruction. Together they had counseled against God; “king and princes together,” they should go into captivity.

There is also doubtless, in the word Malcham, a subordinate allusion to the god whom they worshiped under the title Molech or Malchom. Certainly Jeremiah “seems” so to have understood it. For, having said of Moab,

“Chemosh shall go into captivity, his priests and his princes together” (~~3487~~Jeremiah 48:7),

he says as to Ammon, in the self-same formula and almost in the words of Amos;^{f166} “Malcham shall go into captivity, his priests and his princes together.” Zephaniah (~~3005~~Zephaniah 1:5) also speaks of the idol under the same name Malcham, “their king.” Yet since Ammon had kings before this time, and just before their subdual by Nebuchadnezzar, and king Baalis (~~3404~~Jeremiah 40:14) was a murderer, it is hardly likely that Jeremiah too should not have included him in the sentence of his people, of whose sins he was a mainspring. Probably, then, Amos and Jeremiah foretell, in a comprehensive way, the powerlessness of all their stays, human and idolatrous. All in which they trusted should not only fail them, but should be carried captive from them.

NOTES ON AMOS 2

<AMOS> Amos 2:1. *Moab* The relation of Moab to Israel is only accidentally different from that of Ammon. One spirit actuated both, venting itself in one and the same way, as occasion served, and mostly together (see the note at **<AMOS>** Amos 1:13). Beside those more formal invasions, the history of Elisha mentions one probably of many in-roads of “bands of the Moabites.” It seems as though, when “the year entered in,” and with it the harvest, “the bands of the Moabites entered in” (**<2KINGS>** 2 Kings 13:20, literally, “And the bands of Moab were wont to come in,” “as the year came in”) too, like “the Midianites and Amalekites and the children of the east” (**<JUDGES>** Judges 6:3,4,11) in the time of Gideon, or their successors the Bedouins, now. This their continual hostility is related in the few words of a parenthesis. There was no occasion to relate at length an uniform hostility, which was as regular as the seasons of the year, and the year’s produce, and the temptation to the cupidity of Moab, when Israel was weakened by Hazael.

Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom The deed here condemned, is unknown. Doubtless it was connected with that same hatred of Edom, which the king of Moab showed, when besieged by Israel. People are often more enraged against a friend or ally who has made terms with one whom they hate or fear, than with the enemy himself. Certainly,

“when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him”
(**<2KINGS>** 2 Kings 3:26,27),

his fury was directed personally against the king of Edom. He “took with him” 700 chosen men “to cut through to the king of Edom, and they could not.” Escape was not their object. They sought not “to cut through” the Edomite contingent into the desert, but “to the king of Edom.” Then “he took his oldest son,” that is, probably the oldest son of the king of Edom^{†167} whom he captured, “and offered him up as a burnt offering on the wall.” Such is the simplest structure of the words; He “strove to cut through to the king of Edom, and they could not, and he took his oldest son, etc., and there was great indignation against Israel.” That “indignation” too on the part of Edom (for there was no other to be indignant “against Israel”) is best accounted for, if this expedition, undertaken because Moab had rebelled against Israel, had occasioned the sacrifice of the son of the king of Edom, who took part in it only as a

tributary of Judah. Edom would have had no special occasion to be indignant with Israel, if on occasion of an ordinary siege, the king of Moab had, in a shocking way, performed the national idolatry of child-sacrifice. That hatred the king of Moab carried beyond the grave, hatred which the pagan too held to be unnatural in its implacableness and unsatiableness. The soul being, after death, beyond man's reach, the hatred, vented upon his remains, is a sort of impotent grasping at eternal vengeance. It wreaks on what it knows to be insensible, the hatred with which it would pursue, if it could, the living being who is beyond it. Its impotence evinces its fierceness, since, having no power to wreak any real revenge, it has no object but to show its hatred. Hatred, which death cannot extinguish, is the beginning of the eternal hate in hell. With this hatred Moab hated the king of Edom, seemingly because he had been, though probably against this will, on the side of the people of God. It was then sin against the love of God, and directed against God Himself. The single instance, which we know, of any feud between Moab and Edom was, when Edom was engaged in a constrained service of God. At least there are no indications of any conquest of each other. The Bozrah of Moab, being in the Mishor, "the plain" (^{<2492>}Jeremiah 48:21,24), is certainly distinct from the Bozrah of Edom, which Jeremiah speaks of at the same time, as belonging to Edom (^{<2493>}Jeremiah 49:13). Each kingdom, Edom and Moab, had its own strong city, Bozrah, at one and the same time. And if "the rock," which Isaiah speaks of as the strong hold of Moab (^{<2360>}Isaiah 16:1), was indeed the Petra of Edom, (and the mere name, in that country of rock-fortresses is not strong, yet is the only, proof,) they won it from Judah who had taken it from Edom, and in whose hands it remained in the time of Amos (^{<2147>}2 Kings 14:7; see above the note at ^{<3000>}Amos 1:12), not from Edom itself. Or, again, the tribute "may" have been only sent through Petra, as the great center of commerce. Edom's half-service gained it no good, but evil; Moab's malice was its destruction.

The proverb, "speak good only of the dead," shows what reverence human nature dictates, not to condemn those who have been before their Judge, unless He have already openly condemned them. "Death," says Athanasius (ad. Ep. AEg. Section 10, in Ath. Hist. Tracts, p. 147. Oxford Translation) in relating the death of Arius on his perjury, "is the common end of all people, and we ought not to insult the dead, though he be an enemy, for it is uncertain whether the same event may not happen to ourselves before evening."

Amos 2:2. *It shall devour the palaces of Kerioth* Literally, “the cities,” that is, a collection of cities. It may have received a plural form upon some enlargement, as Jerusalem received a dual form, as a double city. The name is, in different forms, very common.^{f168} In the plain or high downs of Moab itself, there were both Kiriathaim, “double city” and Kerloth (^{<2482>}Jeremiah 48:23,24); in Naphthali, a Kiriathaim, (^{<1366>}1 Chronicles 6:76, (verse 61 in Hebrew)) or Kartan (^{<613>}Joshua 21:32); in Judah, the Kerioth (^{<615>}Joshua 15:25) from where the wretched Judas has his name Iscariot; in Zebulon, Kartah (^{<6134>}Joshua 21:34) also, which reappears as the Numidian Cirta. Moab had also a Kiriath-huzoth, “city of streets” (^{<923>}Numbers 22:39), within the Arnon (Balak met Balaam at a city of Moab in the border of Arnon, and then returned apparently to Kiriath-Huzoth).

This alone was within the proper border of Moab, such as the Amorites had left it. Kerioth and Kiriathaim were in the plain country which Israel had won from the Amorites, and its possession would imply an aggression of Moab. Jeroboam II had probably at this time brought Moab to a temporary submission (see the note at ^{<3164>}Amos 6:14); but Israel only required fealty and tribute of Moab; Moab appears even before the captivity of the 2 1/2 tribes, to have invaded the possessions of Israel. Kerioth was probably a new capital, beyond the Arnon, now adorned with “palaces” and enlarged, as “Paris, Prague, Cracow (Lap.), “London, are composed of different towns. In Jerome’s time, it had probably ceased to be.^{f169}

Shall die with tumult Jeremiah, when prophesying the destruction of Moab, designates it by this same name “sons of tumult” (^{<2485>}Jeremiah 48:45). A flame shall devour the corner of Moab and the crown of the sons of tumult.” And probably herein he explains the original prophecy of Balaam, “shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of tumult” (^{<9247>}Numbers 24:17). As they had done, so should it be done to them; tumults they caused, “in tumult” they should perish.

After the subdual of Moab by Nebuchadnezzar, it disappears as a nation, unless indeed Daniel in his Prophecy, “Edom and Moab and the chief of the children of Ammon shall escape out of his hand” (Amos 11:41) (Antiochus Epiphanes,) means the nations themselves, and not such as should be like them. Else the intermarriage with Moabite women (^{<1300>}Ezra 9:1) is mentioned only as that with women of other pagan nations which had

ceased to be. The old name, Moabitis, is still mentioned; but the Arabs had possessed themselves of it, and bore the old name. Alexander Jannaeus “subdued” (Josephus, Ant. xiii. 13. 5) we are told, “of the Arabians, the Moabites and Gileadites,” and then, again, when in difficulty, made it over with its fortified places, to the king of the Arabians (Ibid. 14. 2). Among the cities which Alexander took from the king of the Arabians (xiv. 1. 1; compare xiii. 15, 4), are cities throughout Moab, both in that part in which they had succeeded to Israel, and their proper territory south of the Arnon (Medaba and Livias north of the Arnon; Agalla (Eglaim) “8 miles south of it” (Eusebius); Zoar, near the south of the Dead Sea; Oronae (Heronaim) on Edom’s boundary. ^{<2815>} Isaiah 15:5).

^{<3018>} **Amos 2:3.** *And I will cut off the judge* The title “judge” (shophet) is nowhere used absolutely of a king. Holy Scripture speaks in several places of “all the judges of the earth” (^{<8024>} Job 9:24; ^{<9210>} Psalm 2:10; 148:11; ^{<1016>} Proverbs 8:16; ^{<2413>} Isaiah 40:23). Hosea (^{<2830>} Hosea 13:10), under “judges,” includes “kings and princes,” as judging the people. The word “judge” is always used as one invested with the highest, but not regal authority, as of all the judges from the death of Joshua to Samuel. In like way it (Sufetes) was the title of the chief magistrates of Carthage (Livy xxviii. 37. Phoenic. Inscr. in Gesenius’ Lexicon), with much the same authority as the Roman Consuls (Livy, xxx. 7). The Phoenician histories, although they would not own that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Tyre, still own that, after his 13 years’ siege (Josephus, contra Apion i. 21), Baal reigned 10 years, and after him judges were set up, one for two months, a second for ten, a third, a high priest, for three, two more for six, and between these one reigned for a year. After his death, they sent for Merbaal from Babylon, who reigned for four years, and on his death, they sent for Hiram his brother who reigned for twenty. The judges then exercised the supreme authority, the king’s sons having been carried away captive. Probably, then, when Jeroboam II recovered the old territory of Israel, Moab lost its kings. It agrees with this, that Amos says, “the princes thereof,” literally, “her princes,” the princes of Moab, not as of Ammon, “his princes,” that is, the princes of the king.

^{<3018>} **Amos 2:4.** *For three transgressions of Judah etc.* Rup.:

“Here too there is no difference of Jew and Gentile. The word of God, a just judge, spareth no man’s person. whom sin joins in one,

the sentence of the Judge disjoins not in punishment” (~~4012~~Romans 2:12).

As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law, and as many as have signed in the law, shall be judged by the law.” Jerome: “Those other nations, Damascus and the rest, he upbraids not for having cast away the law of God, and despised His commandments, for they had not the written law, but that of nature only. So then of them he says, that “they corrupted all their compassions” — and the like. But Judah, who, at that time, had the worship of God and the temple and its rites, and had received the law and commandments and judgments and precepts and testimonies, is rebuked and convicted by the Lord, for that it had “cast aside His law and not kept His commandments;” wherefore it should be punished as it deserved. And since they rejected and despised these, then, in course, “their lies deceived them,” that is, their idols; “lies” on their part who made them and worshiped them for the true God, and “lies” and lying to them, as deceiving their hopes. “For an idol is nothing in the world” (~~4088~~1 Corinthians 8:4), as neither are all the vanities in the world whereof people make idols, but they deceive by a vain show, as though they were something. Jerome: “They would not have been deceived by their idols, unless they had first rejected the law of the Lord and not done His commandments.” They had sinned with a high hand: “despising” and so rejecting the law of God; and so He despised and rejected them, leaving them to be deceived by the lies which they themselves had chosen. So it ever is with man. Man must either “love God’s law and hate and abhor lies” (~~4096~~Psalm 119:163), or he will despise God’s law and cleave to lies. He first in act “despises” God’s law, (and whoso does not keep it, despises it,) and then he must needs be deceived by some idol of his own, which becomes his God. He first chooses willfully his own “lie,” that is, whatever he chooses out of God, and then his own “lie” deceives him. So, morally, liars at last believe themselves. So, whatever false maxim anyone has adopted against his conscience, whether in belief or practice, to justify what he wills against the will of God, or to explain away what God reveals and he dislikes, stifling and lying to his conscience, in the end deceives his conscience, and at the last, a man believes that to be true, which, before he had lied to his conscience, he knew to be false. The prophet uses a bold word in speaking of man’s dealings with his God, “despises.” Man carries on the serpent’s first fraud, “Hath God indeed said?” Man would not willingly own, that he is directly at variance with the Mind of God. Man, in

his powerlessness, at war with Omnipotence, and, in his limited knowledge, with Omniscience! It were too silly, as well as too terrible. So he smoothes it over to himself, “lying” to himself. “God’s word must not be taken so precisely;” “God cannot have meant;” “the Author of nature would not have created us so, if He had meant;” and all the other excuses, by which he would evade owning to himself that he is directly rejecting the Mind of God and trampling it under foot. Scripture draws off the veil. Judah had the law of God, and did not keep it; then, he “despised” it. On the one side was God’s will, His Eternal Wisdom, His counsel for man for good; on the other, what debasements! On the one side were God’s awful threats, on the other, His exceeding promises. Yet man chose whatever he willed, lying to himself, and acting as though God had never threatened or promised or spoken. This ignoring of God’s known Will and law and revelation is to despise them, “as effectually as to curse God to His face” (^{<1818>}Job 2:5). This rejection of God was hereeditary. Their lies were those “after which their fathers walked,” in Egypt and from Egypt onward, in the wilderness (see the note at ^{<1825>}Amos 5:25,26) (Jerome), “making the image of the calf of Egypt and worshiping Baalpeor and Ashtoreth and Baalim.” Evil acquires a sort of authority by time. People become inured to evils, to which they have been used. False maxims, undisputed, are thought indisputable. They are in possession; and “possession” is held a good title. The popular error of one generation becomes the axiom of the next. The descent “of the image of the great goddess Diana from Jupiter” or of the Coran, becomes a “thing” which cannot be spoken against” (^{<1835>}Acts 19:35,36). The “lies after which the fathers walked” deceive the children. The children canonize the errors of their fathers.” Human opinion is as dogmatic as revelation. The second generation of error demands as implicit submission as God’s truth. The transmission of error against himself, God says, aggravates its evil, does not excuse it (^{<1845>}Nehemiah 5:5). “Judah is the Church. In her the prophet reproves whosoever, worshiping his own vices and sins, cometh to have that as a god by which he is overcome; as Peter saith,

“Whereby a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage” (^{<1855>}2 Peter 2:19).

The covetous worshipeth mammon; the glutton, his belly (^{<1865>}Philippians 3:19); the impure, Baalpeor; she who, “living in pleasure, is dead while she liveth” (^{<1875>}1 Timothy 5:6), the pleasure in which she liveth.” Of such idols the world is full. Every fair form, every idle imagination, everything which

gratifies self-love, passion, pride, vanity, intellect, sense, each the most refined or the most debased, is such a “lie,” so soon as man loves and regards it more than his God.

Amos 2:5. *I will send a fire upon Judah* All know now, how Jerusalem, its temple, and its palaces perished by fire, first by Nebuchadnezzar, then by the Romans. Yet some two centuries passed, before that first destruction came. The ungodly Jews flattered themselves that it would never come. So we know that a “fiery stream” (²⁰⁷⁰Daniel 7:10) will issue and come forth from Him; “a fire” that “consumeth to destruction” (⁸⁸¹²Job 31:12), all who, whether or no they are in the body of the Church, are not of the heavenly Jerusalem; dead members in the body which belongs to the Living Head. And it will not the less come, because it is not regarded. Rather, the very condition of all God’s judgments is, to be disregarded and to come, and then most to come, when they are most disregarded.

Amos 2:6. *For three transgressions of Israel, and for four* In Israel, on whom the divine sentence henceforth rests, the prophet numbers four classes of sins, running into one another, as all sins do, since all grievous sins contain many in one, yet in some degree distinct:

- (1) Perversion of justice;
- (2) oppression of the poor;
- (3) uncleanness;
- (4) luxury with idolatry.

They sold the righteous for silver It is clear from the opposite statement, “that we may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes,” that the prophet is not speaking of judicial iniquity, but of actual buying and selling. The law allowed a Hebrew who was poor to sell himself, ^{f170} and a Hebrew to buy him until the year of release; yet this too with the express reserve, that the purchaser was forbidden to

“serve himself with him with the service of a slave, but as a hired servant and a sojourner stroll he be with thee” (⁴⁸⁵⁹Leviticus 25:39,40).

The thief who could not repay what he stole, was to “be sold for his theft” (^{<0221B>}Exodus 22:2,3). But the law gave no power to sell an insolvent debtor. It grew up in practice. The sons and daughters of the debtor (^{<0085>}Nehemiah 5:5), or “his wife and children” (^{<0085>}Matthew 18:25), nay even the sons of a deceased debtor (^{<0001>}2 Kings 4:1), were sold. Nehemiah rebuked this sharply. In that case, the hardness was aggravated by the fact that the distress had been fomented by usury. But the aggravation did not constitute the sin. It seems to be this merciless selling by the creditor, with Amos rebukes. The “righteous” is probably one who, without any blame, became insolvent. The “pair of shoes,” that is, sandals, express the trivial price, or the luxury for which he was sold. They had him sold “for the sake of a pair of sandals,” that is, in order to procure them. Trivial in themselves, as being a mere sole, the sandals of the Hebrew women were, at times, costly and beautiful (^{<0200>}Song of Solomon 7:1; Ezra 10; Judith 16:9). Such a sale expressed contempt for man, made in the image of God, that he was sold either for some worthless price, or for some needless adornment.

^{<0001>}**Amos 2:7.** *That pant after the dust of the earth* Literally, “the panters!” with indignation. Not content with having rent from him the little hereditary property which belonged to each Israelite, these creditors grudged him even the “dust,” which, as a mourner, he strewed on his head (^{<0002>}Job 2:12), since it too was “earth.” Covetousness, when it has nothing to feed it, craves for what is absurd or impossible. What was Naboth’s vineyard to a king of Israel with his “ivory palace?” What was Mordecai’s refusal to bow to one in honor like Haman? What a trivial gain to a millionaire? The sarcasm of the prophet was the more piercing, because it was so true. People covet things in proportion, not to their worth, but to their worthlessness. No one covets what he much needs. Covetousness is the sin, mostly not of those who have not, but of those who have. It grows with its gains, is the less satisfied, the more it has to satisfy it, and attests its own unreasonableness, by the uselessness of the things it craves for.

And turn aside the way of the meek So Solomon said, “A wicked” man “taketh a bribe out of the bosom, to pervert the ways of judgment.” (^{<0073>}Proverbs 17:23.) God had laid down the equality of man, made in His own image, and had forbidden to favor either poor (^{<0231B>}Exodus 23:3) or rich (^{<0231B>}Exodus 23:6). Amos calls these by different names, which entitled them to human sympathy; “poor, depressed, lowly; poor,” in their absolute condition; “depressed,” as having been brought low; “lowly,” as having the

special grace of their state, the wonderful meekness and lowliness off the godly poor. But all these qualities are so many incentives to injury to the ungodly. They hate the godly, as a reproach to them; because “he is clean contrary to their doings, his life is not like other people’s; his ways are of another fashion” (Wisdom 2:12,15). Wolves destroy not wolves but sheep. Bad people circumvent not the bad but the good. Besides the easiness of the gain, there is a devilish fascinating pleasure to the bad, to overreach the simple and meek, because they are such. They love also to “turn aside the way of the meek,” by (Cyril), “turning them from what is truly right and good; “or from the truth; or again to thwart them in all their ways and endeavors, by open injustice or by perverting justice. Every act of wrong prepares the way for the crowning act; and so “the turning aside the way of the meek” foreshadowed and prepared for the unjust judgment of Him who was “the Meek and Lowly” One (^{<4112>}Matthew 11:29), the selling the righteous for a trilling sum prepared for the selling “the Holy One and the Just” (^{<4484>}Acts 3:14) for “the thirty pieces of silver.” (Dionysius):

“Contrariwise, whoso is truly wise, cordially venerates the humble and abject, the poor and simple, and prefers them in his own heart to himself, knowing that God has ‘chosen the poor, and the weak things of the world, and things despised, and things which are not’ (^{<4127>}1 Corinthians 1:27,28); and that Christ hath likened Himself to such, saying in the Psalm, ‘I am poor and sorrowful’ (^{<4623>}Psalm 69:29).”

The same damsel This is not expressly forbidden by the law, except in the case of marriage, the father being forbidden to marry his son’s widow, and the son to take his father’s widow to wife (^{<6818>}Leviticus 18:8,15). Abominations, unless they had become known to Israel in Egypt, were not expressly forbidden, but were included in the one large prohibition, which, as our Lord explains, forbade every offence, bearing upon it. Israel must have so understood the law, since Amos could upbraid them with this, which is not forbidden by the letter of the law, as a willful insult to the Majesty of God. Reverence was due from the son to the father, example from the father to the son. But now the father was an example of evil to the son; and the son sinned in a way which had no temptation except its irreverence. People, sated with ordinary sin seek incitement to sin, in its very horrors. Probably this sin was committed in connection with their idol worship (see the note at ^{<2014>}Hosea 4:14). The sin of marrying the father’s widow was “fornication not so much as named among the Gentiles” (^{<4811>}1

Corinthians 5:1); it was unknown, as seemingly legalizing what was so unnatural. Oppression of the poor, wronging the righteous, perverting the way of the meek, laid the soul open for any abomination.

To profane My Holy Name that is, as called upon them, as the people of God. God had said, “ye shall keep My commandments and do them” (~~1023~~ Leviticus 22:31,32; add ~~1010B~~ Leviticus 20:3; 18:21; 21:6). “I” am “the Lord, and ye shall not defile My Holy Name. For I will be sanctified among the children of Israel. I am the Lord who sanctifies you.” The sins of God’s people are a reproach upon Himself. They bring Him, so to say, in contact with sin. They defeat the object of His creation and revelation. He created man in His Image, to bear His likeness, to have one will with Himself. In effect, through sin, He has created rebels, deformed, unlike. So long as He bears with them, it seems as if He were indifferent to them. Those to whom He has not revealed Himself, must needs think that He takes no account of what He permits unnoticed. Israel, whom God had separated from the pagan, did, by “mingling with the pagan and learning their works” (~~1046S~~ Psalm 106:35), all which in them lay, to “profane” His “Holy Name.” They acted as if they had no other purpose than to defile it (see the note at ~~2004~~ Hosea 8:4). Had such been their object, they could not have done it more effectually, they could not have done otherwise. In deliberate sin, people act, at last, in defiance of God, in set purpose to dishonor Him. The Name of God has ever since been blasphemed, on account of the sins of the Jews, as though it were impossible that God should have chosen for His own, a people so “laden with iniquities” (~~2104~~ Isaiah 1:4). Nathan’s words to David, “Thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme” (~~1024~~ 2 Samuel 12:14), have been fulfilled until this day. How much more, Christians, who not only are called “the people of God” but bear the name of Christ incorporated in their own. Yet have we not known Muslims flee from our Christian capital, in horror at its sins? “He lives like a Christian,” is a proverb of the Polish Jews, drawn from the debased state of morals in Socinian Poland. The religion of Christ has no such enemies as Christians. Dionysius: “As the devout by honoring God, shew that He is Holy, Great, Most High, who is obeyed in holiness, fear and reverence, so the ungodly, by dishonoring God, exhibit God as far as in them lies, as if lie were not holy. For they act so as if evil were well-pleasing to Him, and induce others to dishonor Him. Wherefore the Apostle saith; “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you” (~~1024~~ Romans 2:24); and by Ezekiel the Lord saith oftentimes,

“Ye have profaned My Holy Name. And I will sanctify My great Name which wets profaned among the pagan, which ye hare profaned in the midst of them” (^{<3623>}Ezekiel 36:23).

The devout then are said to “magnify,” sanctify, “exalt God;” the unrighteous to “profane (^{<3639>}Ezekiel 13:19), despise, God.”

^{<1018>}**Amos 2:8.** *They lay themselves down* They condensed sin. By a sort of economy in the toil of sinning, they blended many sins in one; idolatry, sensuality, cruelty, and, in all, the express breach of God’s commandments. The “clothes” here are doubtless the same as the “raiment” in the law, the large enfolding cloak, which by day was wrapped over the long loose shirt,^{f171} the poor man’s only dress besides, and by night was his only bedding (^{<10226>}Exodus 22:26,27). God had expressly commanded,

“If the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge” (^{<10242>}Deuteronomy 24:12,13);

in any case “thou shalt deliver him the pledge again, when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee; and it shall be righteousness to thee before the Lord thy God.” Here the “garments laid to pledge” are treated as the entire property of the creditors. They “stretch” their listless length along upon them in their idol-feasts “by every altar.” Ezekiel speaks of a “stately bed,” upon which they “sat, and a table prepared before it” (^{<35241>}Ezekiel 23:41). Isaiah;

“Upon a lofty and high mountain, hast thou set up thy bed; even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice; thou hast enlarged thy bed; thou hast loved their bed; thou providedst room” (^{<2507>}Isaiah 57:7,8).

In luxury and state then, and withal in a shameless publicity, they “lay on the garments” of the despoiled “by every altar.” The multiplication of altars (^{<28811>}Hosea 8:11; 10:1; 12:11) was, in itself, sin. By each of these multiplied places of sin they committed fresh sins of luxury and hard-heartedness, (perhaps, from the character of the worship of nature, yet grosser sins,) “and drink the wine of the condemned,” or (as the English margin more exactly) “the amerced,” those whom, unjustly, persons in any petty judicial authority had “amerced,” expending in revelry and debanchery in the idol’s temple what they had unjustly extorted from the oppressed. There is no mask too transparent to serve to hide from himself one who does not wish

to see himself. Nothing serves so well as religion for that self-deceit, and the less there is of it, or the more one-sided it is, the better it serves. For the narrower it is, the less risk of impinging on the awful reality of God's truth; and half a truth as to God is mostly, a lie which its half-truth makes plausible. So this dreadful assemblage of cruelty, avarice, malice, mockery of justice, unnatural debauchery, hard-heartedness, was doubtless smoothed over to the conscience of the ten tribes by that most hideous ingredient of all, that "the house of their god" was the place of their ill-purchased revelry. People do not serve their idols for nothing; this costly service at Bethel was not for nought. They did all these things; but they did something for "the Deity" or "Nature" or "Ashtoreth;" and so "the Deity" was to be at peace with them. Amos, with wonderful irony, marks the ghastly mixture of sin and worship, "they drank the wine of the amerced" — where? "in the house of their God," condemning in five words their luxury, oppression, perversion of justice, cruelty, profaneness, unreal service and real apostasy. What hard-heartedness to the willfully-forgotten poor is compensated by a little Church-going!

<100>**Amos 2:9.** *Yet* (and I) *I* (Emphatic) *destroyed* Such were "their" doings; such their worship of "their God." And what had "God" done? what was it, which they thus requited?

The Amorite These, as one of the mightiest of the Canaanite tribes, stand in Moses for all. Moses, in rehearsing to them the goodness of God and their backsliding, reminds them, how he had said,

"Ye have come to the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord your God giveth you" (<100>Deuteronomy 1:20);

and that they, using this same word, said,

"Because the Lord hateth us, He hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorite to destroy us" (<100>Deuteronomy 1:27).

The aged Joshua, in rehearsing God's great deeds for Israel, places first by itself the destruction of the Amorite before them, with the use of this same idiom (<100>Joshua 24:8; Moses has the same idiom of God's act on behalf of Ammon and Edom, <100>Deuteronomy 2:21,22),

"I brought you into the land of the Amorites which dwelt on the other side of Jordan — and I destroyed them before you."

The Amorites were descended from the 4th son of Canaan (^{<0106>}Genesis 10:16). At the invasion of Chedorlaomer, a portion of them (“those Amorites who dwelt.”) dwelt at Hazon-Tamar or Engedi, half way on the west side of the Dead Sea, and at Hebron near it (^{<0147>}Genesis 14:7,13; compare ^{<0138>}Genesis 13:18; ^{<4402>}2 Chronicles 20:2). Their corruption had not yet reached its height, and the return of Israel was delayed to the four hundredth year, “because the iniquity of the Amorite was not yet full” (^{<0156>}Genesis 15:16). When Israel returned, the Amorites, (together with the Hittites and the Jebusites) held the hill country (^{<0139>}Numbers 13:29; ^{<0007>}Deuteronomy 1:7,44), Jerusalem, Hebron, Gibeon (^{<0002>}2 Samuel 21:2), and, on the skirts of the mountains westward^{f172} Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon (^{<0608>}Joshua 10:3,5). They dwelt on the side of the Jordan westward (^{<0005>}Joshua 5:1), besides the two kingdoms which they had formed east of Jordan, reaching to Mount Hermon (^{<0008>}Deuteronomy 3:8) and Bashan up to the territory of Damascus. Afterward a small remnant remained only in the portion of Dan, and in the outskirts of Judah, from the south of the Dead Sea, Maaleh Akrabbim (Scorpion-pass) and Petra (^{<0005>}Judges 1:35,36). Those near Idumea were probably absorbed in Edom; and the remnant in Dan, after becoming tributary to Ephraim (^{<0005>}Judges 1:35,36), lost their national existence perhaps among the Philistines, since we have thenceforth only the single notice in the days of Samuel after the defeat of the Philistines, “there was peace between Israel and the Amorites” (^{<0074>}1 Samuel 7:14).

Whose height was like the height of the cedars The giant sons of Anak were among the Amorites at “Hebron” (^{<0132>}Numbers 13:22) (called for a time Kiriath Arba (^{<0645>}Joshua 14:15; 15:13,14) from their giant father) “Debir, Ahab, and the mountains of Judah and Israel” (^{<0612>}Joshua 11:21). The valley of Rephaim” (^{<0158>}2 Samuel 5:18), southwest of Jerusalem, connects this giant race with the Amorites, as does the fact that Og, king of the Amorites in Basan, was “of the remnant of the Rephaim” (^{<0001>}Deuteronomy 3:11; ^{<0624>}Joshua 12:4; 13:19). Basan and Argob were, in Moses’ time, still called “the land of Rephaim” (^{<0003>}Deuteronomy 3:13). The Rephaim, with the Perizzites, dwelt still in woody mountains near Ephraim; from where, on the complaint that the lot of the sons of Joseph was too narrow, Joshua bade his tribe to expel them (^{<0675>}Joshua 17:15,18). The Rephaim are mentioned between the Perizzites and the Amorites (^{<0150>}Genesis 15:20,21), in God’s first promise of the land to Abraham’s seed, and perhaps some intermixture of race gave the giant stature to the

Amorites. It is clear from Amos that the report of the spies, “all the people that we saw in it were men of stature” (^{<0433>}Numbers 13:32), was no exaggeration, nor did Joshua and Caleb deny “this.” The name of the Amorite is probably connected with “commanding,” describing some quality of their forefather, which descended to his race.

Whose height was like the height of cedars Giant height is sometimes a cause of weakness. Amos, in a degree like Hosea combines distinct images to make up the idea of stateliness and strength. The cedar is the ideal of eastern trees for height (^{<2133>}Isaiah 2:13; ^{<3172>}Ezekiel 17:22; 31:3; ^{<1043>}1 Kings 4:33; ^{<1249>}2 Kings 14:9), stretching forth its arms as for protection (Commentary in ^{<2133>}Isaiah 2:13. ap. Basil. Opp.), “It groweth to an exceeding height, and with increasing time ever riseth higher.” The oak has its Hebrew name from strength. The more majestic the tall strength of the Amorite, the more manifest that Israel “got not the land in possession by their own sword” (^{<0413>}Psalms 44:3), who had counted themselves, in sight of the Amorite, “as grasshoppers” (^{<0433>}Numbers 13:33). God, who gave him that strength, took it away, as we say, “root and branch,” leaving him no show above, no hope of recovered life below (see ^{<3016>}Hosea 9:16; ^{<8816>}Job 18:16; ^{<3170>}Ezekiel 17:9). Having compared each Amorite to a majestic tree, he compares the excision of the whole nation to the cutting down of that one tree (Dionysius), so swift, so entire, so irrecoverable. Yet the destruction of the Amorite, a mercy to Israel in the purpose of God, was a warning to Israel when it became as they. God’s terrors are mercies to the repentant; God’s mercies are terrors to the impenitent.

“Ye shall keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not commit any of these abominations,” was the tenure upon which they held the Lord’s land, “that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you” (^{<0835>}Leviticus 18:26,38).

^{<3120>}**Amos 2:10.** *Also I* (Literally, “And I,” I, emphatic; thus and thus did ye to Me; and thus and thus, with all the mercy from the first, did I to you,) *I brought you up from the land of Egypt* It is this language in which God, in the law, reminded them of that great benefit, as a motive to obedience; “I brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (^{<0210>}Exodus 20:2; ^{<0815>}Deuteronomy 5:6; 6:12); only there, since God has not as yet “brought them up” into the land which He promised

them, but they were yet in the wilderness, He says, “brought them forth;” here, “brought them up,” as to a place of dignity, His own land.

And led you forty years through the wilderness These are the very words of the law (^{<6204>}Deuteronomy 29:4, (5 English), and reminded them of so many benefits during the course of those “forty years,” which the law rehearsed; the daily supply of manna, the water from the rock, the deliverance from the serpents and other perils, the manifold forgivenesses. To be “led forty years through the wilderness,” alone, had been no kindness, but a punishment. It was a blending of both. The abiding in the wilderness was punishment or austere mercy, keeping them back from the land which they had shown themselves unqualified to enter: God’s “leading” them was, His condescending mercy. The words, taken from the law, must have re-awakened in the souls of Israelites the memory of mercies which they did not mention, how that same book relates “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about; He instructed him; He kept him as the apple of His eye. The Lord alone did lead him” (^{<6210>}Deuteronomy 32:10,12). In the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went until ye came to this place” (^{<6133>}Deuteronomy 1:31); or that minute tender care, mentioned in the same place (^{<6204>}Deuteronomy 29:4, (5, English)), “your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.” But unless Israel had known the law well, the words would only have been very distantly suggestive of mercy, that it must have been well with them even in the wilderness, since God “led them.” They had then the law in their memories, in Israel also (See the introduction to Amos), but distorted it or neglected it.

^{<1021>}**Amos 2:11.** *And I raised up of your sons for prophets* Amos turns from outward mercies to inward, front past to present, from miracles of power to miracles of grace. God’s past mercies live on in those of today; the mercies of today are the assurance to us that we have a share in the past; His miracles of grace are a token that the miracles of His power are not our condemnation. God had, from the time of Moses, “raised up” prophets. Eldad and Medad (^{<04125>}Numbers 11:26-9) were images Of those, whom God would raise up beyond the bounds of His promise. Samuel was an Ephrathite (^{<0901>}1 Samuel 1:1); Ahijah the Shilonite, that is, of Shiloh in Ephraim, lived on to old age in the kingdom of the ten tribes after their schism, the witness against the apostasy of Jeroboam (^{<1147>}1 Kings 14:7-14;

15:29), yet acknowledged by the king whose rise and of the destruction of whose house he prophesied (^{<1142>}1 Kings 14:2,4). Jehu, son of Hanani, was the prophet of both kingdoms (^{<1161>}1 Kings 16:1,7,12; ^{<1492>}2 Chronicles 19:2; 20:34); Micaiah, son of Imlah, was well known to Ahab, as “prophesying evil concerning him” (^{<1218>}1 Kings 22:8,18) continually; unknown to Jehoshaphat (^{<1217>}1 Kings 22:7). That wondrous pair, marvelous for superhuman sanctity and power among the marvelous miracles of God, Elijah and Elisha, were both “sons” of Israel, whom God “raised up; Elijah the Tishbite” (^{<1170>}1 Kings 17:1), born doubtless at Thisbe, a village of Naphthali (Tobit 1:2. See Reland, 1035. Eusebius and Jerome mention the village Thisbe), and one of the sojourners in Gilead; Elisha of Abelmeholah (^{<1196>}1 Kings 19:16), on the west side of the valley of the Jordan.^{f173} And even now He had raised up to them of their own “sons,” Hosea and Jonah. Their presence was the presence of God among them, who, out of the ordinary way of His Providence, “raised” them “up” and filled them with His Spirit; and where the presence of God is, if there is fear, yet there is also hope.

And of your young men for Nazarites The Nazarite was a fruit of the grace of God in its moral and religious workings, superhuman in holiness and self-denial, as the prophets were of that same grace, conferring superhuman wisdom and knowledge also. Of both, God says, “I raised up,” teaching that both alike, holiness of life and superhuman wisdom, were His own special gift to each individual, His own creation. God survived His people, called, and “raised up,” by His grace, out of the crowd, those souls which responded to His call. The life of the Nazarites was a continual protest against the self-indulgence and worldliness of the people. It was a life above nature. Unless any prophet like Samuel (^{<9011>}1 Samuel 1:11), was also a Nazarite, they had no special office except to live that life. Their life taught. Nay, it taught in one way the more, because they had no special gifts of wisdom or knowledge, nothing to distinguish them from ordinary people, except extraordinary grace. They were an evidence, what all might do and be, if they used the grace of God. The power of the grace of God shows itself the more wondrously in these who have nought beside. The essence of the Nazarite life, as expressed by its name, was “separation,” separation from things of the world, with a view to God. The separation was not, necessarily, for more than a limited time. In such case, it answered to the strictness of the Christian Lent. It was a considerable discipline for a time. In those simpler days, when luxury had not been so busy,^{f174} the

absolute prohibition of anything fermented (^{<040B>}Numbers 6:3,4), whether from the grape or any other substance (The strong drink), was the more comprehensive, because it was undefined. Jerome enumerates, as prohibited under it, “every inebriating drink, whether made of barley, or juice of apples, or when honey is decorated into a sweet barbarian drink, or liquor is expressed from the date, or when water is colored and thickened by boiled fruit.” (Ep. ad Nepotian.) Accordingly beer, cider, mead (^{<3192>}οινομελι) or “dibs” datewine and any other fermented liquor, of whatever, (like our British wines,) it might be made, was forbidden.) or vinegar made of either, or any liquor or refreshing food or drink, made in any way from the grape, fresh or dry, its husks or its kernels, while it cut off every evasion, involved the giving up not only every drink, in any way exciting or stimulating, but very much also, which was refreshing. Water, which in the east has seldom the freshness of ours, was their only drink. This, which to individuals may be an easy rule, would not be so in the main. Those only think an undeviating rule slight, who have never tried one, nor set themselves on system to conquer self-will. Such a rule would not be acted upon, except for God. The long never-shorn hair was probably intended to involve the neglect of personal appearance. Yet this was the body only of the vow; its soul was the dedication to God. The Nazarite not only “separated himself from” (^{<040B>}Numbers 6:3) those earthly things; he “separated himself to” the Lord (^{<040E>}Numbers 6:2,5,6): he “consecrated to the Lord the days of his separation” (^{<040E>}Numbers 6:12): all the days of his separation he was holy to the Lord (^{<040B>}Numbers 6:8): the separation of his God was upon his head.” (^{<040E>}Numbers 6:7). The vow was a great and singular thing. “When man or woman shall vow a special vow of a Nazarite” (^{<040E>}Numbers 6:2). The ritual of the Nazarite likened him to the priest. Giving him no priestly office, it yet even intensified some of the rules of the priesthood. The priest was to abstain from wine and strong drink, only “when” he “went into the tabernacle of the congregations,” that he might “put difference between holy and unholy, and teach Israel the statutes” of the Lord (^{<040B>}Leviticus 10:9-11): the Nazarite, so long as he remained such. The priest might defile himself for certain very near dead (^{<040B>}Leviticus 21:1-3); the high priest alone and the Nazarite, “neither for father nor mother” (^{<040B>}Leviticus 21:11,12; ^{<040E>}Numbers 6:7): and that for the kindred reason; the high priest, “because the crown of the anointing oil of his God” was “upon him;” the Nazarite, “because the consecration of his God was upon his head!” His consecrated hair was called by the self-same name (^{<040B>}Numbers 6:19) as the mitre of

the priest. It appears to have been woven into “seven locks” (^{<0763>}Judges 16:13), itself a number of consecration. If his consecration came to an end, that hair was mingled with the sacrifice (^{<0468>}Numbers 6:18), and on “his” hands alone, besides the priest’s at his consecration, was part of the offering laid (^{<0469>}Numbers 6:19). All Israel was, in God’s purpose, “a kingdom of priests” (^{<0296>}Exodus 19:6); and, among them, the Nazarite was brought yet nearer, not to the priest’s office, but to his character. This must have diffused itself indefinitely through the outward and inward life. Further strictness probably lay in the spirit of the vow. The outward appearance of the Nazarites appears to have been changed by their abstemiousness. “Her Nazarites were purer than snow; they were whiter than milk” (^{<2907>}Lamentations 4:7). Their countenance had that transparent (The Septuagint renders **Ēz1** ^{<12134>}, ^{<0378>}Exodus 30:34 by **διαφανής** ^{<1307>}) purity, which sometimes results from a pure abstemious life; as Athanasius is said to have been “bloodless.” John the Immerser, the counterpart of Elijah, ate only of the food of the wilderness, “locusts and wild honey;” his clothing was the hair cloth (^{<0015>}Luke 1:15; 7:33; ^{<0104>}Matthew 3:4). Of James the Just it is related with reference to the Nazarite vow (Hegesippus in Eusebius, H. E. ii. 23);

“He was holy from his mother’s womb; wine and strong drink he drank not, nor ate any living thing; the razor came not up upon his head; he anointed him not with oil, and he used not a bath.”

Nazarites there had been in the most disorganized times of Israel. The histories of Samson and Samuel stand over against one another, as Nazarites who, the one forfeited, the other persevered in, his vocation. Elijah’s ascetic character is as if he had been one of them, or deepened the lines of their rule. Ahaziah’s ungodly messengers described him contemptuously as “a man, lord of hair,” as though he had nothing but his prophet’s broad mantle of hair, and “the leather girdle about his loins”.^{f175} The Rechabites, although Kenites by origin (^{<1325>}1 Chronicles 2:55), had been enrolled in the people of God, and had received a rule from their father, uniting with the abstinence of the Nazarites, a mode of life which kept them aloof from the corruptions of cities (^{<2657>}Jeremiah 35:7,9). The rules of their Nomadic life were consecrated to God, for He says, “There shall not be cut off from Jonadub, the son of Rechab, a man standing before Me for ever” (^{<2659>}Jeremiah 35:19), that is, as the servant of God. God uses as to them the term which marks the service of the Levites (^{<6108>}Deuteronomy 10:8), priests (^{<0718>}Judges 20:28), and prophets (^{<1170>}1

Kings 17:1). Jonadab, the author of their rule, was plainly an ascetic, through whose presence Jehu hoped to cast a religious character over his ambitious execution of God's command.^{f176} But the value which the artful, though impetuous (^{<1191>}2 Kings 9:20), bloodstained, captain attached to the presence of the ascetic shows the weight which they had with the people. Strange sight it must have been, the energetic warrior in his coat of mail, and the ascetic, as energetic, in his hair-cloth. Deeper far the contrast within. But the more marvelous the contrast, the more it attests the influence which the unworldly ascetic had over the world. Like the garb of the prophets, their appearance was a standing rebuke to a life of sense. Like the patriarchs, it professed that they were "strangers and pilgrims upon the earth." They who sought nothing of the world or of time, were a witness to the belief in their eternal home. The Nazarites must now have been a numerous body, since Amos speaks of them, as a known class, like the prophets, of whose numbers we hear incidentally (See the introduction to Hosea. Obadiah saved the lives of an hundred prophets, ^{<1180>}1 Kings 18:4). Yet the memory of these, who, amid the general corruption, were, each in his own sphere, centers of pure faith and life, is embalmed in these few words only. So little reason is there to think that God's commands were neglected by all, because their observance is not related. Amos appeals publicly to the people that the fact was so, that God had raised up Nazarites as well as prophets among them. He had His "little flock" (^{<1212>}Luke 12:32), His "seven thousand" (^{<1198>}1 Kings 19:18), who escaped the eye even of Elijah. The gift of the Nazarites was a special favor to Israel, as a memorial what the grace of God could do for man, what man could do, with the grace of God. His "raising up Nazarites, out of their young men," men in their first bloom of unmarried (^{<1880>}Ruth 3:10; ^{<2616>}Isaiah 62:5), virgin (^{<1825>}Deuteronomy 32:25; ^{<1457>}2 Chronicles 36:17; ^{<2512>}Jeremiah 51:22; and in the plur. ^{<9783>}Psalms 78:63; 148:12; ^{<2304>}Isaiah 23:4; ^{<4913>}Jeremiah 31:13; ^{<2018>}Lamentations 1:18; 2:21; ^{<3977>}Zechariah 9:17; and by Amos himself, ^{<1183>}Amos 8:13), life their picked "very chosen men," such as furnished the prime of their warriors,^{f177} strengthened that teaching. Even now, one devoted to God in his youth is a witness for God, leaven of the world around him. But the Nazarite had also to bear an outward mark for good, to be singular. His appearance bespoke that he had chosen God. His vow was not only a living up to the law; it lay beyond the law, the free-will offering of those whom God called. At an age, when so many do things unlawful, to gratify passion, these abstained even from things lawful. "Canst thou not do what these youths and these maidens can? or

can they either in themselves, and not rather in the Lord their God?” was Augustine’s upbraiding of himself (Conf. viii. 27. p. 152. Oxford Translation), on the eve of his conversion, in thought of those who were living a devoted virgin life.

Is it not even thus? It were enough that God, the Truth, said it. But He condemns not, without giving space for excuse or defense. So he describes the Day of Judgment (^{<4754>}Matthew 25:24-30,41-45; 22:11).

“The books were opened — and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works” (^{<4612>}Revelation 20:12).

Now, in the time of grace, the question asks, what, written under the picture of Christ crucified, once converted a sinner; “This have I done for thee: What doest thou for Me?” What did they? What had they done? What would they do?

^{<4012>}**Amos 2:12.** *But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink* Literally, “and,” (this, on their part, was the consequence of what God did for them) “ye caused the Nazarites to drink wine.” God appointed; Israel strove to undo His appointment. God “raised up Nazarites,” as a testimony to them; they sought to make His servants break their vow, in order to rid themselves of that testimony. Their pains to destroy it, is a strong proof of its power. The world is mad against true religion, because it feels itself condemned by it. People set themselves against religion and the religious, the Church or the priesthood, only when and because they feel their power on God’s side against them. What people despise, they do not oppose. “They kill us, they do not despise us,” were true words of a French priest, as to the “reign of reason” in the first French revolution. If the people in power had not respected the Nazarites, or felt that the people respected them, they would not have attempted to corrupt or to force them to break their vow. The word, “cause” them “to drink,” does not express whether they used constraint or seduction. Israel’s consciences supplied it. Yet since they “persecuted the prophets” and put them to death, it seems likely that Amos means that they used violence, either by forcing the wine into their mouths, as the swine-flesh was forced into the mouth of Eleazar (2 Macc. 6:18), and, in the Decian persecution an infant was made to eat of the idol oblation (Cyprian on the lapsed Section 16. p 169. Oxford Translation), or by threat of death.

And commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not God had commanded the prophets to prophesy. Israel issued and laid upon them his commands against the commands of God. The more God reveals His Will, the directer and more determinate the opposition of those who will not yield. God's perseverance in trying to win them irritates them; they oppose grace, and are angered at not being let alone. This large statement of Amos means much more than the prohibition of Amaziah to himself (^{<3073>}Amos 7:13). Jeroboam I was prevented only by miracle (^{<1139>}1 Kings 13:4) from seizing the prophet who denounced the altar at Bethel. Ahab, during the famine foretold by Elijah, sought him everywhere to destroy him (^{<1180>}1 Kings 18:10-12), and Jezebel, after the miracle at Carmel and the death of her prophets, swore by her gods to do so (^{<1192>}1 Kings 19:2,3). Ahab's last act was to imprison Micaiah (^{<1225>}1 Kings 22:26,27), the son of Imlath, for prophesying his death, when adjured by himself to speak truly. Ahaziah, his son, undeterred by the fire from heaven which destroyed two captains, each with his fifty, sent yet a 3d to take Elijah, when he prophesied that the king would not recover from his sickness (^{<1209>}2 Kings 1:9-13). Jehoram, his second son, swore by God to destroy Elisha, (^{<1251>}2 Kings 6:31), laying the evils of the siege to the prophet, as the Romans did the evils of their decaying empire to the Christian. Micah and Isaiah, a little later, speak of such opposition, in Judah, as habitual (^{<3116>}Micah 2:6; ^{<3100>}Isaiah 30:10,11); much more in Israel, where the opposition to God's law was more fundamental, and where God's prophet's had been all but exterminated. Even Asa, in his degenerate days, imprisoned Hanani for prophesying that he would "have wars" (^{<4467>}2 Chronicles 16:7,10); Joash killed Zechariah son of Jehoiada (^{<4420>}2 Chronicles 24:20,21); Amaziah silenced the prophet who rebuked him, "Art thou made of the king's council? forbear. Why shouldest thou be smitten?" (^{<4255>}2 Chronicles 25:15,16). Jehoiakim sent even into Egypt to fetch Uriah and killed him (^{<2251>}Jeremiah 26:20-23). Jeremiah's life was one continuous encounter with false accusations (^{<2100>}Jeremiah 20:10; 37:13; 38:4), contradictions by false prophets (^{<2237>}Jeremiah 23:17ff; 27:9,10,14-16; Jeremiah 28; Jeremiah 29), hatred (^{<2450>}Jeremiah 15:10), mockery (^{<2475>}Jeremiah 17:15; 20:7,8; 23:33), persecution (^{<2478>}Jeremiah 17:18), imprisonment (^{<2412>}Jeremiah 20:2; 32:3; 33:1; 37:15-21; 38:6-13), attempts to destroy him (^{<2418>}Jeremiah 11:18-21; 18:18, 20-23; 26:8ff; 36:26). The complaint was, as here, "wherefore dost thou prophesy?" (^{<2431>}Jeremiah 32:3). What, when our Lord gives it as the characteristic of Jerusalem (^{<4137>}Matthew 23:37. ἡ ^{<3588>} **αποκτεινουσα** ^{<615>} **τους** ^{<3588>} **προφητας** ^{<4396>} **και** ^{<2532>} **λιθομολουσα** ^{<3037>}), that

she was “the slayer of the prophets, the stoner of those sent unto her?” They would not have slain the prophets, if they could have silenced them. People are loath to go to extremities with God; they will make an armistice with Him; their awe of holiness makes them inwardly shrink from laying hands on it. Like the wolf in the fable, they must have a plea against it; and that plea against those who have the truth is obstinacy.^{f178} If the Christians would have abstained from converting the world, they would not have been persecuted. The Chief-priests at first sought simply to silence the Apostles (~~404B~~ Acts 4:18,21); then they enforced their command with scourges (~~415A~~ Acts 5:40); then persecuted them and the Christians to death (~~405C~~ Acts 7:57-9; 8:1-4; 9:1,2; 12:1-3; 22:4,5). Direct contumacy to God’s known voice and silencing His messenger, is a last stage of obduracy and malice, which leaves God no further avenue to the soul or the people. His means of grace are exhausted when the soul or people not only deaden His voice within, but obstruct it without. One who, through vehemence of his passions, refuses to hear, is within the reach of the grace of God, afterward. He who stifles God’s word to others has mostly hardened his heart deliberately and maliciously in unlove to man, as well as contempt of God. Hence, God speaks, as though this brought the day of grace to a close.

~~302B~~ **Amos 2:13.** *Behold, I am pressed under you* God bore His people, as the wain bears the sheaves. “Ye yourselves have seen,” He said to them by Moses,

“how I bare you on eagle’s wings, and brought you unto Myself” (~~090A~~ Exodus 19:4).

“Thou hast seen how the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place” (~~003B~~ Deuteronomy 1:31).

And by Isaiah,

“He bare them and carried them all the days of old” (~~230D~~ Isaiah 63:9);

and, “which are born” by Me “from the belly, which are carried from the womb” (~~240B~~ Isaiah 46:3). Now, He speaks of Himself as wearied by them, as by Isaiah, “thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities” (~~240A~~ Isaiah 43:24); and by Malachi,

“ye have wearied the Lord: yet ye say, where with have we wearied Him?” (³⁰¹⁷Malachi 2:17).

His long-suffering was, as it were, worn out by them. He was straitened under them, as the wain groans under the sheaves with which it is over-full. The words are literally, “Behold I, I” (emphatic I, your God, of whom it would seem impossible) “straiten myself” (that is, of My own Will allow Myself to be straitened) “under you”, ^{f179} “as the wain full for itself,” that is, as full as ever it can contain, is “straitened, groans,” as we say. God says, (the word in Hebrew is half active) that He allows Himself to be straitened, as in Isaiah, He says, “I am weary to bear,” literally, “I let Myself be wearied.” We are simply passive under weariness or oppressiveness: God endures us, out of His own free condescension in enduring us. But it follows, that when He shall cease to endure our many and grievous sins, He will cast them and the sinner forth from Him.

³⁰²⁴**Amos 2:14-16.** Israel relied, against God, on his own strength.

“Have we not,” they said, “taken to us horns by our own strength?” (³⁰⁶³Amos 6:13).

Amos tells them then, that every means of strength, resistance, flight, swiftness of foot, of horse, place of refuge, should fail them. Three times he repeats, as a sort of dirge, “he shall not deliver himself.”

Therefore the flight shall perish (Probably place of flight (³⁸¹¹Job 11:20; ⁴⁸²⁶Psalms 142:5; ⁴²⁵⁸Jeremiah 25:35)). They had despised God, as their “place of refuge” (is so used as to God, ⁴¹²³2 Samuel 22:3; ⁴⁵⁹⁷Psalms 59:17; ²⁴⁶⁹Jeremiah 16:19), so “the place of refuge, should perish from the swift,” as though it were not. He should flee again, but there would be no “place to flee unto.” God alone “renews strength;” therefore “the strong” man should not “strengthen his force or might,” should not be able to gather or “collect his strength” (So ³⁸⁴⁵Proverbs 24:5) as we say. Fear should disable him. “The handler of the bow” (as in ²⁴⁴⁹Jeremiah 46:9), and who by habit is a skilled archer, although himself out of the immediate reach of the enemy, and able, unharmed, to annoy him and protect the fugitives, “shall not stand” (as in ³⁴²¹Jeremiah 46:21; ³⁴¹⁸Nahum 2:8). Panic should overtake him. The “mighty” man, the “fleet of foot” should “not deliver,” yea, “the horseman” should not “deliver himself;” yea, he who, “among the mighty,” was “strongest of his heart,” firm-souled among those of mightiest prowess, “shall flee away naked,” that is, bared of all, armor

(As Livy speaks persons “unarmed and naked,” iii. 23; or Peter in said to be “naked,” before he had girt on his upper garment, (επενδουτης <1902>) <B10>John 21:7; and Virgil directs his farmers to “plow and sow naked,” Georg. i. 229. that is, unencumbered with the upper dress) or dress, which might encumber his flight “in that day” which the Lord made a day of terror His own day.

Saith the Lord Probably literally, “the secret utterance (From the Arabic) of the Lord.” Amos, more than Hosea, uses this special authentication of his words (At the end of the sentence, here and <B1B>Amos 3:13,15; 4:3,5,6,8,9,10,11; 9:8,12; in the middle, <B1B>Amos 3:10; 6:8,14; 8:3,9,11; 9:7,13), which is so common in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. He claims a knowledge, which those around him had not, and ratifies it by the express appeal to the direct, though secret, revelation of God; what those who were not of God, would deny; what they who were of God, would believe.

NOTES ON AMOS 3

<318B>Amos 3:1. Amos, like Hosea, rebukes Israel directly, Judah indirectly. He had warned each nation separately. Now, ere he concentrates himself on Israel, he sums up what he had before said to Judah and in the Person of God. “Ye have been alike in My gifts to you, alike in your waste of them and your sins; alike ye shall be in your punishment.” What was said to Israel was said also to Judah: what was directed first to the former people, belongs to us, the later. What Jesus said to the Apostles, He said also to the Church, and to single souls, “What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch” (**<4137>**Mark 13:37).

Hear ye this word With that solemn threefold call, so frequent in the Old Testament, he summons them thrice (**<318B>**Amos 3:1; 4:1; 5:1), as in the Name of the Holy Trinity, to hear God’s words. (Dionysius):

“The prophet, at the outset of the chapter, rouses the hearers to anxious consideration. For the words of the most High God are to be heard, not with a superficial, unawed, wandering mind, but with reverence, fear, and love.”

That the Lord hath spoken against (and upon) *you*, (coming down from heaven (**<3125>**Hebrews 12:25), both “upon” and “against” them)

the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt To Abraham God had said, “in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (**<0123>**Genesis 12:3). So now, in withdrawing that blessing from them. He takes it away from them, family by family (**<3122>**Zechariah 12:12). He includes them, one and all, and Judah also, since all had been “brought out of Egypt.”

<318B>Amos 3:2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities* Such is the one law of God. The nearer anyone is brought unto God, the worse is his fall, and, his trial over, the more heavily is he punished. Nearness to God is a priceless, but an awesome gift. The most intense blessing becomes, by the abuse of free will, the most dreadful woe. For the nearer God places anyone to His own light, the more malignant is the choice of darkness instead of light. The more clearly anyone knows the relation to God, in which God has

placed him, the more terrible is his rejection of God. The more God reveals to any, what He IS, His essential perfections, His holiness and love, the more utter, tearful malignity it is, to have been brought face to face with God, and to have in deed said to Him, “On Thy terms I will have none of Thee.” The angels who sinned against fullest light, had no redemption or repentance; but became devils. “He took not on Him the nature of angels” (^{<3826>}Hebrews 2:16).

“The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great Day” (^{<6006>}Jude 1:6).

Of the former people, when their first day of grace was past, Daniel says; “under the whole heaven hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem” (^{<2092>}Daniel 9:12). Begin,” God saith in Ezekiel’s

“at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house” (^{<3996>}Ezekiel 9:6).

So our Lord lays down the rule of judgment and punishment hereafter” (^{<0247>}Luke 12:47,48) “the servant which knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not” himself, “neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many” stripes. “But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much has been given, of him shall much be required, and to whom people have committed much, of him they will ask the more. The time is come,” says Peter, “that judgment must begin at the house of God” (^{<0417>}1 Peter 4:17).

You only I have known Such care had God had of Israel, so had He known them, and made Himself known to them, as if He had, in comparison, disregarded all besides, as He remained unknown by them. Knowledge, among people, is mutual, and so it seemed as if God knew not those, of whom He was not known. Knowledge, with God, is love, and so He seemed not to have known those, to whom, although “He left not Himself without witness” (^{<4417>}Acts 14:17), He had shown no such love (see the note at ^{<3836>}Hosea 13:5, p. 83). Whence our Lord shall say to the wicked, “I never knew you” (^{<4023>}Matthew 7:23); and contrariwise, He says, “I am the good Shepherd and know My sheep, and am known of Mine” (^{<3004>}John 10:14; see ^{<3029>}2 Timothy 2:19). (Cyril):

“Myriads of cities and lands are there under the whole heaven, and in them countless multitudes; but you alone have I chosen out of

all, made Myself known and visible among you by many miracles, chosen you out of a bitter unbearable bondage, trained you by My law to be well-pleasing to Me, fenced you with protection, brought you into the land promised to your fathers, enlightened you with prophecies.”

(Dionysius)

“Not, I deem, as though in the time of Israel and of the Old Testament, there were not, in the whole world, some good people and predestinated; but because God did not then choose any nation or whole people, save the children of Israel. For it was meet that that people, of which God willed to be Incarnate, should be distinguished by some special grace.”

Therefore I will punish you (Cyril):

“To despise God and to neglect the Lord’s Will procureth destruction to those who have known Him or been known of Him, and been spiritually made His own.” “I made you My own people, friends, sons. As a Father, I cherished, protected, exalted, you. Ye would not have Me as a Father, ye shall have Me as a Judge.”

Rup.:

“As Israel has, in its elect, been glorious above all, so, in the reprobate, has it been made viler than all, both before God and before people.”

How much more Christians, and, among Christians, priests! It has of old been believed, that the deepest damnation will be that of ungodly priests.

Yet since almost all punishment in this life is remedial, the saying admits another meaning that God would leave no sin unchastened in those whom He had made His own. Both are true meanings, fulfilled at different times. God chastens in proportion to His love, in the Day of grace. He punishes, in proportion to the grace and love despised and trampled upon without repentance in eternity. Here (Jerome in Ezekiel 7 Sanct. in ~~2014~~ Hosea 4:14), “the most merciful Physician, cutting away the cancrous flesh, spareth not, that He may spare; He pitieth not, that He may the more pity. For ‘whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.’“ Hence, the prayer (Ap. Augustine, Andrewes, Prayers), “Burn,

cut, here; and spare forever.” Contrariwise (Gregory in Ezekiel L. i. Hom. xii. 18), “we should esteem any sinner the more miserable, when we see him left in his sin, uncourged. Whence it is said, “The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them” (^{<1013>}Proverbs 1:32). For whoso “turneth away” from God and is “prosperous,” is the nearer to perdition, the more he is removed from the severity of discipline.” (Origen, Hom. viii. 5. on Exodus xx. S):

“This is the terrible, this the extreme case, when we are no longer chastened for sins, when we are no more corrected for offending. For when we have exceeded the measure of sinning, God, in displeasure, turneth away from us His displeasure.”

(Jerome on ^{<2044>}Hosea 4:14. S):

“When you see a sinner, affluent, powerful, enjoying heath, with wife and circle of children, and that saying is fulfilled, ‘They are not in trouble’ (^{<1935>}Psalms 73:5) as other ‘men, neither are they plagued like’ other ‘men,’ in him is the threat of the prophet fulfilled, ‘I will not visit.’”

^{<1013>}**Amos 3:3.** Sacred parables or enigmas must have many meanings. They are cast on the mind, to quicken it and rouse it by their very mystery. They are taken from objects which in different lights, represent different things, and so suggest them. This series of brief parables have, all of them, this in common, that each thing spoken of is alternately cause and effect, and where the one is found, ‘there’ must be the other. From the effect you can certainly infer the cause, without which it could not be, and from the cause you may be sure of the effect. Then, further, all the images are of terror and peril to the objects spoken of. The prophet impresses upon their minds both aspects of these things; “evil will not befall, unless it has been prepared;” “signs of evil will not shew themselves, unless the evil be at hand.” “The bird will not fall without the snare; if the snare rises and so shews itself, the bird is as good as taken. As surely then (the prophet would say) as the roaring of the lion, the rising of the snare, the alarm of the trumpet, betokens imminent peril, so surely does the warning Voice of God. ‘The lion hath roared; who will not fear?’ Again, as surely as these are the effects of their causes, so surely is all infliction sent by Him who alone has power over all things, and is the cause of all. ‘Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Again, as these tokens are given before the evil comes, and the God of nature and of grace has made it a

law in nature, that what is fearful should give signs of coming evil, so has He made it a law of His own dealing, not to inflict evil, without having fore-announced it. ‘Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveleth His secret unto His servants the prophets.’ As nothing else is by chance, nor happens without cause, much less the acts of God. The lion or young lion when they roar, the bird when it falls to the ground, the snare when it rises, the trumpet’s sound, all have their cause and ground: shall not then much more the acts and works of God? Shall evil happen in the city, and have no ground in the Cause of all causes, God in His righteous judgments? As there is fear, whenever there are tokens and causes of fear, so fear ye now and watch, lest the fear overtake you and it be too late. The first words then,

Can (will) two walk together, except they be agreed? are at once a general rule for all which follows, and have different bearings according to those its several aspects. And, before all these, it is an appeal at once to the conscience which feels itself parted from its God; “so neither will God be with thee, unless thou art agreed and of one mind with God. Think not to have God with thee, unless thou art with God;” as He saith, ‘I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way’ (^{<0233>}Exodus 33:3); and, ‘if ye walk contrary unto Me, then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins’ (^{<0234>}Leviticus 26:23,4). And on the other hand, ‘They shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy’ (^{<0235>}Revelation 3:4). Lap.: “God cannot be agreed with the sinner who justifies himself. Rup.:

“God who rebuketh, and Israel who is rebuked, are two. God saith, We are not agreed, in that Israel, when rebuked, heareth not Me, God, rebuking. Herein we are not agreed, that I rebuke, Israel justifieth himself. Lo, for so many years since Jeroboam made the golden calves, have I sent prophets, and none agreeth, for no one king departed from the sin of Jeroboam. So then I came Myself, God made man, rebuking and reprovng: but ‘ye are they which justify yourselves before men’ (^{<0236>}Luke 16:15), and, being sick, ye say to the Physician, we need Thee not.”

Augustine in Ps 75 Lap.:

“So long as thou confessest not thy sins, thou art in a manner litigating with God. For what displeaseth Him, thou praisest. Be at one with God. Let what displeaseth Him, displease thee. Thy past

evil life displeaseth Him. If it please thee, thou art disjoined from Him; if it displease thee, by confessing thy sins, thou art joined to Him.”

So He awakens and prepares the soul for the following words of awe.

In connection with what follows, the words are also the prophet’s defense of his Mission. Israel “said to the prophets, prophesy not” (see the notes on ^{<302D>}Amos 2:12), or, “The Lord our God hath not sent thee” (^{<348D>}Jeremiah 43:2), because, while it disobeyed God, the prophets must “speak concernig it not good, but evil.” Amos prepares the way for his answer; ye yourselves admit, that “two will” not “walk together, unless they be agreed.” The seen and the unseen, the words of the prophets and the dealings of God, would not meet together, unless the prophets were of one mind with God, unless God had admitted them into His counsels, and “were agreed” with them, so that their words should precede His deeds, His deeds confirm His words by them.

^{<308D>}**Amos 3:4.** *Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey?*

Then, further, each question by itself suggests its own thought. Amos had already, in repeating Joel’s words, spoken of God’s Voice, under the image of a lion roaring (^{<300D>}Amos 1:2; ^{<3110>}Hosea 11:10 (add 5:14; 6:1; 13:7); ^{<325D>}Jeremiah 25:30). Hosea had likened Israel to “a silly dove without heat (^{<307D>}Hosea 7:11); on the other hand, he had likened God’s loud call to repentance to the roaring of the lion, the conversion of Israel to the return of the dove to its home (^{<3110>}Hosea 11:10,11). As the roaring of the lion causeth terror, for he sendeth forth his terrible roar when he is about to spring on his prey (Boch. Hieroz. i. iii. 2), so God threatens by His prophets, only when He is about to punish. Yet the lion’s roar is a warning to escape. God’s threatening is a warning to betake them to repentance, and so to escape from all fear, by fleeing from their sins. If the season is neglected, wilt thou rescue the prey from the lion’s grasp, or thyself from the wrath of God?

^{<308D>}**Amos 3:5.** *Can a bird fall in a snare* Again, the bird taken in the snare is the image of those drawn down from heaven, where ‘our conversation is (^{<308D>}Philippians 3:20) and the soul may rise free toward its God (Art. xvii), “drawn up by the Spirit to high and heavenly things.” Such souls being allured by the things of earth, are entangled and taken by Satan; as, on the other hand, “the soul, escaped as a bird out of the snare of the

fowler (^{<3047>}Psalm 124:7), is a soul, set free by Christ and restored to heaven.

In the last likeness, the prophet comes nearer to the people themselves, and the trumpet is, at once, the well-known token of alarm among people, and of the loud voice of God, wakening them to repentance (^{<2801>}Isaiah 58:1; ^{<2025>}Joel 2:15) and still oftener, warning them of the approach of judgment (^{<2808>}Isaiah 18:3; ^{<2045>}Jeremiah 4:5; 6:1; ^{<2602>}Ezekiel 33:2-6; ^{<2008>}Hosea 5:8; 8:1; Revelation 8), or summoning man before Him (^{<4152>}1 Corinthians 15:52; ^{<2046>}1 Thessalonians 4:16). Rup.: “God’s Voice will not always be ‘a still small voice,’ or whispered only among the Angels, or heard as from the ground. It will be heard terribly in the whole world.” Jerome: “Whatever is said in Holy Scripture is a trumpet threatening, and with loud voice sinking into the hearts of believers. If we are righteous, we are called by the trumpet of Christ to bliss. If we are sinners, we know that we are to suffer torment.”

^{<2006>}**Amos 3:6.** *Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it?* Evil is of two sorts, evil of sin, and evil of punishment. There is no other; for evil of nature, or evil of fortune, are evils, by God’s Providence, punishing the evil of sin. Augustine, c. Adim. 26: “Evil, which is sin, the Lord hath not done; evil, which is punishment for sin, the Lord bringeth.” The Providence of God governing and controlling all things, man doth ill which he wills, so as to suffer ill which he wills not. Only, evil which is by God’s Providence the punishment of sin is in this life remedial and through final impenitence alone becomes purely judicial.

Rib.:

“Refer not, the prophet would say, the ills which ye suffer and will suffer, to any other causes, as people are accustomed to do. God, in His displeasure, sends them upon you. And that ye may know this the more certainly, whatever He shall send He will first reveal to the prophets and by them ye shall be forewarned. See then that ye despise not my words, or the words of the other prophets. People ascribe their sufferings to fortune, accident, any cause, rather than the displeasure of God. The intemperate will think anything the cause of their illness rather than their intemperance. People love the things of the world and cannot and will not be persuaded that so many evils are brought on them by the things

which they love. So then God explains through the prophets the punishment which He purposes to bring on people.”

Amos 3:7. *Surely the Lord God will do* For the Lord GOD “doeth”

nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets So our Lord saith, “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe” (**John 14:29**; compare **John 13:19**). While it is yet a “secret” counsel within Himself, He admitteth to it His servants the prophets. The same word signifies “secret” and “secret counsel with a friend.” So (Jerome),

“God revealed to Noah that he would bring the deluge, and to Abraham and Lot, that He would destroy the cities of the plain, and to Joseph the 7 years’ famine in Egypt, and to Moses its plagues, and to Moses and Joshua all the chastisements of His people, and to Jonah the destruction of Nineveh, that they who heard of the coming punishment, might either avoid it by repentance, or, if they should despise it, might be more justly punished. And so now the Lord is about to reveal through Amos, His servant and prophet, what He willeth to do to the 10 tribes, that forsaking their idols and turning to Him, they might be freed from the impending peril; which is of the great mercy of God. He foretelleth evil to come, that He may not be compelled to inflict it. For He who forewarneth, willeth not to punish sinners.”

Lap.:

“So He inflicted not on Egypt any plagues by the hand of Moses, but He first forewarned Pharaoh and the Egyptians by him; nor the sufferings by the Ammonites, Midianites and Philistines, related in the Book of Judges, but He foremonished Israel by Joshua (**Joshua 23:12-16; 24:19,20**); nor did He inflict on the Jews that destruction by Titus and the Romans, but He foremonished them by Christ (**Luke 19:42-44**) and the Apostles. So neither will He bring that last destruction on the world, without having first sent the prophets and Angels, who, sounding with the seven trumpets, shall proclaim it throughout the world” (**Revelation 8:2**).

Amos 3:8. *The Lion hath roared: who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken: who can but prophesy?* that is, there is cause for you to fear,

when the Lord “roareth from Zion;” but if ye fear not, God’s prophets dare not but fear. So Paul saith, “necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation” of the Gospel “is committed unto me” (^{<4196>}1 Corinthians 9:16,17); and Peter and John,

“whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye! For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (^{<4049>}Acts 4:19,20);

Moses was not excused, though slow of speech; nor Isaiah, though of polluted lips; nor Jeremiah, because he was a child; but God said, “Say not, I am child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak” (^{<2407>}Jeremiah 1:7). And Ezekiel was bidden, “be not rebellious, like that rebellious house” (^{<2408>}Ezekiel 2:8). And when Jeremiah would keep silence, he saith,

“His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay” (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 20:9).

^{<3109>}**Amos 3:9.** *Publish* “ye,” they are the words of God, commissioning His prophets

in (on) the palaces of Ashdod, that is, on the flat roofs of their high buidings, from where all can hear

and in (on) the palaces in the land of Egypt Theodoret: “Since ye disbelieve, I will manifest to Ashdodites and Egyptians the transgressions of which ye are guilty.” Amos had already pronounced God’s sentence on “the palaces of Ashdod” and all Philistia, for their sins against Himself in His people (see the notes at Amos 1:6-8). Israel now, or a little later, courted Egypt (^{<2071>}Hosea 7:11; 12:1). To friend then and to foe, to those whom they dreaded and those whom they courted, God would lay open their sins. Contempt and contumely from an enemy aggravate suffering: man does not help whom he despiseth. “They were all ashamed of a people who could not profit them,” saith Isaiah (^{<2315>}Isaiah 30:5) subsequently, of Egypt in regard to Judah. From those palaces, already doomed to destruction for their sins, the summons was to go, to visit Samaria, and see her sins, amid grace which those people had not. As our Lord says,

“It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, than for that city” (~~4005~~ Matthew 10:15).

Shame toward man survives shame toward God. What people are not ashamed to do, they are, apart from any consequences, ashamed to confess that they have done. Nay, to avoid a little passing shame, they rush upon “everlasting shame.” So God employs all inferior motives, shame, fear, hope of things present, if by any means He can win people, not to offend Him.

Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria that is, those surrounding it. Samaria was chosen with much human wisdom for the strong capital of a small people. Imbedded in mountains, and out of any of the usual routes,^{f180} it lay, a mountain-fastness in a rich valley. Armies might surge to and fro in the valley of Jezreel, and be unconscious of its existence. The way from that great valley to Samaria lay, every way, through deep and often narrowing valleys,^{f181} down which the armies of Samaria might readily pour, but which, like Thermopylae, might be held by a handful of men against a large host. The broad vale near the hill of Dothan (“A huge hill, covered over with ruins.” V. de Velde, i. 364), along which the blinded Syrian army followed Elisha to Samaria, contracts into “a narrow valley” (Ibid. 370), before it reaches Samaria. The author of the book of Judith, who knew well the country, speaks of “the passages of the hill-country” near Dothaim, “by” which “there was an entrance into Judaea, and it was easy to stop them that would come up, because the passage was strait for two men at the most” (Judith 4:7. This was probably a proverbial expression).^{f182}

“A series of long winding ravines open from the mountains to the plain; these were the passes so often defended by the ‘horns of Joseph, the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh’ against the invaders from the north.”

Within these lay (V. de V. 373) “the wide rocky rampart” which fenced in Samaria from the north (Robinson, ii. 304). “The fine round swelling hill of Samaria, now cultivated to the top, (about 1,100 feet above the sea (Poole, in V. de Velde, Memoir, 178), and 300 from its own valley (Porter, 344) stands alone in the midst of a great basin of some two hours (or 5 miles) in diameter surrounded by higher mountains on every side.” (Robinson, ii. 307):

“The view from its summit presents a splendid panorama of the fertile basin and the mountains around, teeming with large villages, and includes not less than 25 degrees of the Mediterranean.”

Such a place, out of reach, in those days, from the neighboring heights, was well-near impregnable, except by famine. But its inhabitants must have had handed down to them the memory, how those heights had once been populated, while their valleys were thronged with “all the hosts” (~~2~~ Kings 6:24) of Benhadad, his chariots and his horsemen; and the mountains, in which they had trusted to shut out the enemy, were the prison-walls of their famished people. From those heights (V. de Velde, i. 377),

“the Syrians could plainly distinguish the famishing inhabitants of the city. The adjacent circle of hills were so densely occupied, that not a man could push through to bring provisions to the beleaguered city.”

The city, being built on the summit and terraced sides of the hill, unfenced and unconcealed by walls which, except at its base, were unneeded, lay open, unsheltered in every part from the gaze of the besiegers. The surrounding hills were one large amphitheater, from where to behold the tragedy of Israel (Montanus), and enemies were invited to be the spectators. They could see its faminestricken inhabitants totter along those open terraces. Sin had brought this chastisement upon them. God had forgiven them then. When God who had, by His prophet, foretold their relief then (~~2~~ Kings 7:1,2), now by His prophet called anew those enemies of Samaria to those same heights to behold her sins, what could this mean but that He summoned them to avenge what He summoned them to behold? It was no figure of speech. God avenges, as He comforts, not in word, but in deed. The triumph of those enemies David had especially deprecated,

“Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumised triumph” (~~2~~ Samuel 1:20).

To these Israel was to be a gazingstock. They were like “the woman set in the midst” (~~John~~ John 8:3), amid one encircling sea of accusing insulting faces, with none to pity, none to intercede, none to show mercy to them who “had shewed no mercy.” Faint image of the shame of that Day, when

not people's deeds only, but "the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed" (^{<4526>}Romans 2:16), and "they shall begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us" (^{<4230>}Luke 23:30); and of that "shame" there will be no end, for it is "everlasting" (^{<2712>}Daniel 12:2).

And behold the great tumults I.e, the alarms, restlessness, disorders and confusion of a people intent on gain; turning all law upside down, the tumultuous noise of the oppressors and oppressed. It is the word which Solomon uses (Prog. xv. 16), "Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and tumult therewith," the tumults and restlessness of continual gaining. "And the oppressed," or better (as in the English margin) the oppressions,^{f183} the manifold ever-repeated acts by which people were crushed and trampled on.

In the midst thereof Admitted within her, domiciled, reigning there in her very center, and never departing out of her, as the Psalmist says,

"Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deciet and guile depart not from her streets" (^{<4551>}Psalms 55:11).

Aforetime, God spared His people, that "His Name (^{<3209>}Ezekiel 20:9) should not be polluted before the pagan, among whom they were, in whose sight I made Myself known unto them in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt." Now He summons those same pagan as witnesses that Israel was justly condemned. These sins, being sins against the moral law, the pagan would condemn. People condemn in others, what they do themselves. But so they would see that God hated sin, for which He spared not His own people, and could the less triumph over God, when they saw the people whom God had established and protected, given up to the king of Assyria.

^{<3180>}**Amos 3:10.** *For* (and) *they know not to do right* They "have not known," they have least all sense and knowledge, how "to do right" (literally, what is "straight-forward") because they had so long ceased to do it. It is part of the miserable blindness of sin, that, while the soul acquires a quick insight into evil, it becomes, at last, not paralyzed only to "do" good, but unable to perceive it. So Jeremiah says,

"they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (^{<3402>}Jeremiah 4:22).

Whence of the Christian Paul says,

“I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil” (^{<6169>}Romans 16:19).

People, step by step, lose the power of understanding either good or evil, the love of the world or the love of God. Either becomes “a strange language” to ears accustomed to the “songs of Zion” or the din of the world. When our Lord and God came to His own, they said,

“we know that God spake unto Moses: as for this man we know not whence He is” (^{<4192>}John 9:29).

And this blindness was brought about by covetousness which “blindeth the eyes” even of “the wise” (^{<1218>}Exodus 23:8), as he adds;

Who store (Literally, with indignation, “the storers”

with violence and robbery They could not understand what was right, while they habitually did what was wrong. They “stored up,” as they deemed, the gains and fruits; the robbery and injustice they saw not, because they turned away from seeing. But what is “stored” up, is not what wastes away, but what abides. Who doubts it? Then, what they treasured, were not the perishing things of earth, but, in truth, the sins themselves, as

“a treasure of wrath against the Day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (^{<4115>}Romans 2:5).

Strange treasure, to be so diligently accumulated, guarded, multiplied! Yet it is, in fact, all which remains.

“So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God” (^{<4121>}Luke 12:21).

He adds, as an aggravation, “in their palaces.” Deformed as in all oppression, yet to “oppress the poor, to increase his riches” (^{<3126>}Proverbs 22:16), has an unnatural hideousness of its own. What was wrung from the poor, laid up “in places!” Yet what else is it to cheapen luxuries at the cost of the wages of the poor?

^{<3181>}**Amos 3:11.** *Therefore thus saith the Lord God* There was no human redress. The oppressor was mighty, but mightier the Avenger of the poor. Man would not help; therefore God would. “An adversary” there shall be, “even round about the land;” literally, “An enemy, and around the land!” The prophets speaks, as seeing him. The abruptness tells how suddenly that

enemy should come, and hem in the whole land on all sides. What an unity in their destruction! He sees one “enemy, and” him everywhere, all “around,” encircling, encompassing, as with a net, their whole land, narrowing in, as he advanced, until it closed around and upon them. The corruption was universal, so should be the requital.

And he shall bring down thy strength from (that is, away from) *thee* The word “bring down” implies a loftiness of pride which was to be brought low, as in Obadiah, “thence will I bring thee down” (³⁰⁰⁴Obadiah 1:4); and in Isaiah, “I will bring down their strength to the earth” (²³⁰⁵Isaiah 63:6). But further, their strength was not only, as in former oppressions, to be “brought down,” but “forth from thee. Thy palaces shall be spoiled;” those palaces, in which they had heaped up the spoils of the oppressed. Man’s sins are, in God’s Providence, the means of their punishment. “Woe to thee that spoilest and” (²³⁰¹Isaiah 33:1) (that is, whereas) thou wert “not spoiled, and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou perfectest, spoiling, thou shalt be spoiled; when thou accomplishest dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.” Their spoiling should invite the spoiler, their oppressions should attract the oppressor and they, with all which they held to be their strength, should go “forth” into captivity.

Rib.:

“The Lord will be justified in His sayings, and in His works, when He executeth judgment on ‘us and shall be cleared,’ even by the most unjust judges, ‘when He is judged.’” (³⁵⁰⁴Psalms 51:4). He cites the Ashdodites and Egyptians as judges, who were witnesses of His benefits to this people, that they might see how justly He punished them. And now the hardened Jews themselves, Turks and all Hagarenes, might be called to behold at once our iniquities, and ‘the mercies of the Lord, that we are not consumed’ (²³⁰²Lamentations 3:22). If these were gathered on the mountains of Samaria, and surveyed from aloft our sins, who worship Mammon and Vain-glory and Venus for God, doubtless the Name of God would through us be blasphemed among the pagan. ‘Imagine yourselves withdrawn for a while to the summit of some lofty mountain,’ says the blessed martyr Cyprian (ad Don. Treatises, p. 5. Oxford Translation), ‘view thence the face of things, as they lie beneath you, yourself free from contact of earth, cast your eyes

hither and thither, and mark the turmoils of this billowy world. You too, recalled to self-remembrance, will pity the world; and, made more thankful to God, will congratulate yourself with deeper joy that you have escaped it. See thou the ways obstructed by bandits, the seas infested by pirates, war diffused everywhere by the camp's bloodstained fierceness: a world reeking with mutual slaughter; and homicide, a crime in individuals, called virtue when worked by nations. Not innocence but the scale of its ferocity gains impunity for guilt. Turn thy eyes to the cities, thou wilt see a populated concourse more melancholy than any solitude.' This and much more which he says of the life of the Gentiles, how it fits in with our's, any can judge. What greater madness than that people, called to heavenly thrones, should cling to trifles of earth? immortal man glued to passing, perishable things people, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, for lucre wrong their brethren, redeemed by the same Price, the same Blood! No marvel then, that the Church is afflicted, and encompassed by unseen enemies, and her strength drawn down from her spoiled houses."

"Samaria is also every soul, which willeth to please man by whom it thinketh it may be holpen, rather than God, and, boasting itself to be Israel, yet worshipeth the golden calves, that is, gold, silver, honors, and pleasures. Let people alien from the light of the Gospel survey 'its tumults,' with what ardor of mind riches, pleasures are sought, how ambition is served, how restless and disturbed the soul is in catching at nothings, how forgetful of God the Creator and of heavenly things and of itself, how minded, as if it were to perish with the body! What tumults, when ambition bids one thing, lust another, avarice another, wrath another, and, like strong winds on the sea, strong, unbridled passions strive together! They 'know not to do right,' bad ends spoiling acts in themselves good. They 'treasure up violence,' whereas they ought to treasure up grace and charity against that Day when God shall judge the secrets of people. And when they ascribe to themselves any benefits of the divine mercy, and any works pleasing to God, which they may have done or do, what else do they than 'store up robbery?' So then the powers of the soul are "spoiled," when truths as to right action, once known and understood by the soul, fade and are obscure,

when the memory retaineth nothing usefull, when the will is spoiled of virtues and yields to vicious affections.”

Amos 3:12. *As the shepherd taketh* (Rather, rescueth) *out of the mouth of the lion two legs* (Properly, the shank, the lower part of the leg below the knee, which in animals is dry, and bone only and worthless) “or apiece” (the tip) “of an ear, so” (that is, so few and weak, so bared and spoiled, a mere remnant,) “shall the children of Israel be taken out” (rather, “rescued”) “that” now “dwell” at ease “in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus”,^{f184} in “a couch,” or rather “in Damascus, a couch.” Now, that soft, rounded, oblong, hill of Samaria, was one large luxurious couch, in which its rich and great rested securely, propped and cushioned up on both sides, in, what is still the place of dignity, “the corner of a bed,” or “Divan,” that is, the inner corner where the two sides meet. Damascus also, which Jeroboam had won for Israel, was a canopied couch to them, in which they stayed themselves. It is an image of listless ease and security, like that of these whom the false prophetesses lulled into careless stupidity as to their souls; “sewing pillows to all armholes,” or “wrists” (³¹³⁸Ezekiel 13:18), whereon to lean in a dull inertness. In vain! Of all those who then dwelt at ease and in luxury, the Good Shepherd Himself should rescue from “the lion,” (the enemy, in the first instance the Assyrian,) a small remnant, in the sight of the enemy and of man of little account, but precious in the sight of God. The enemy would leave them perhaps, as not worth removing, just as, when the lion has devoured the fat and the strong, the shepherd may recover from him some slight piece of skin or extremity of the bones. Amos then, as well as Joel (see the note at ³¹²²Joel 2:32), preaches that same solemn sentence, so repeated throughout the prophets, “a remnant” only “shall be saved.” So doubtless it was in the captivity of the ten tribes, as in the rest. So it was in Judah, when certain “of the poor of the land” only were “left behind vine-dressers and for farmers” (⁴²⁵²2 Kings 25:12; ³⁵²⁶Jeremiah 52:16). In the Gospel,

“not many wise men after the flesh not many mighty, not many noble were called” (⁴⁰²⁶1 Corinthians 1:26),

but “God chose the poor of this world, rich in faith” (³⁰²⁶James 2:5), and the Good Shepherd rescued from the mouth of the lion those whom man despised, yet who “had ears to hear.” After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, a poor remnant only escaped. Rup.

“The spirit of prophecy foresaw both captivities, the end whereof was to confirm the faith, not in one place only but in all the earth, and so a slight remnant was “rescued from the mouth of the lion,” that is, from the slaughter of the destroyers, and permitted to live, that through them, as a witness and monument, the justice of God might be known from age to age, and the truth of the Scriptures might be everywhere, borne about by them, still witnessing to Christ the Son of God, who is known by the law and the prophets. Hapness remnants, so “taken out” for the good of others, not their own!”

As these remnants of the animal show what it was which the lion destroyed, yet are of no further profit, so are they now a memorial of what they once were, what grace through their sins they have lost.

Rib.:

“Many souls will perish because they trust in their own strength, and no more call on God to have mercy on them than if they could rise of themselves and enter the way of salvation without God. They trust in the power of their friends, or the friendship of princes, or the doctrines of philophers, and repose in them as in a couch of Damascus. But Christ, the Good Shepherd, will rescue out of the mouth of “the lion,” who “goeth about seeking, whom he may devour,”

what is last and of least esteem in this world, who have anything whereby the Good Shepherd can hold them. The “legs” signify the desire to go to hear the Word of God; the extremity of the ear, that obedience was not wholly lost. For if any begin even in part to obey the word of God which he hath heard, God, of His fatherly mercy, will help him and lead him on to perfect obedience. The legs also denote desire (Gregory on Job L. vi. n. 25), whereby, as by certain steps, the soul approacheth to God or departeth from Him. Yet if a soul would be saved, desires suffice not; but if to these obedience to the heavenly commands be added, it shall be rescued from the mouth of the lion.”

Amos 3:13. *Hear ye and testify ye in* (Rather unto or against)^{f185} the house of Israel; first “hear” yourselves, then “testify,” that is, solemnly “protest,” in the Name of God; and “bear witness unto” and “against” them, so that the solemn words may sink into them. It is of little avail to

“testfy,” unless we first “hear;” nor can man “bear witness” to what he doth not know; nor will words make an “impression,” that is, leave a trace of themselves, be stamped in or on people’s souls, unless the soul which utters them have first hearkened unto them.

Saith the Lord God of hosts “So (From Rup.) thundereth, as it were, the authority of the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of the shepherd. Foretelling and protesting the destruction of the altar of Bethel, he sets his God against the god whom Israel had chosen as theirs and worshiped there, “the Lord God of hosts,” against “the similitude of a calf that eateth hay” (^{<3946>}Psalm 106:20). Not I, a shepherd, but so speaketh my God against your god.”

^{<3184>}**Amos 3:14.** *In the day that I shall visit the transgression of Israel upon, him, I will also visit (upon) the altars of Bethel* Israel then hoped that its false worship of “nature” would avail it. God says, contrariwise, that when He should punish, all their false worship, so far from helping them, should itself be the manifest object of His displeasure. Again God attests, at once, His long-suffering and His final retribution. Still had He foreborne to punish, “being slow to anger and of great goodness;” but when that day, fixed by the divine Wisdom, should come, wherein He should vindicate His own holiness, by enduring the sin no longer, then He would “visit their transgressions,” that is, all of them, old and new, forgotten by man or remembered, “upon them.” Scripture speaks of “visiting offences upon” because, in God’s Providence, the sin returns upon a man’s own head. It is not only the cause of his being punished, but it becomes part of his punishment. The memory of a man’s sins will be part of his eternal suffering. Even in this life, “remorse,” as distinct from repentance, is the “gnawing” of a man’s own conscience for the folly of his sin. Then also God would visit upon the false worship. It is thought that God visits less speedily even grave sins against Himself, (so that man does not appeal falsely to Him and make Him, in a way, a partner of his offence,) than sins against His own creature, man. It may be that, All-Merciful as He is, He bears the rather with sins, involving corruption of the truth as to Himself, so long as they are done in ignorance, on account of the ignorant worship (^{<4173>}Acts 17:23,30; 14:16) of Himself, or the fragments of truth which they contain, until the evil in them have its full sway in moral guilt (Romans 1). Montanus: “Wonderful is the patience of God in enduring all those crimes and injuries which pertain directly to Himself; wonderful His waiting for repentance. But the deeds of guilt which violate human society, faith, and justice, hasten judgment and

punishment, and, as it were, with a most effectual cry call upon the Divine Mind to punish, as it is written,

“The voices of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground,
And now cursed art thou, ...” (^{<01340>}Genesis 4:10,11).

If then upon that very grave guilt against God Himself there be accumulated these other sins, this so increases the load, that God casts it out. However long then Israel with impunity, given itself to that vain, alien worship, this evinced the patience, not the approval, of God. Now, when they are to be punished for the fourth transgression, they will be punished for the first, second and third, and so, most grievously; when brought to punishment for their other sins, they should suffer for their other guilt of impiety and superstition.”

And the horns of the altar This was the one great “altar” (^{<1122>}1 Kings 12:32,33; 13:1-5) for burnt-offerings, set up by Jeroboam, in imitation of that of God at Jerusalem, whose doom was pronounced in the act of its would-be consecration. He had copied faithfully outward form. At each corner, where the two sides met in one, rose the “horn,” or pillar, a cubit high (The size under the second temple), there to sacrifice victims, (^{<13827>}Psalm 118:27), there to place the blood of atonement (^{<12912>}Exodus 29:12). So far from atoning, they themselves were “the” unatoned “sin” of “Jeroboam whereby” (^{<21721>}2 Kings 17:21) he drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. These were to be cut off; hewn down, with violence. A century and a half had passed, since the man of God had pronounced its sentence. They still stood. The day was not yet come; Josiah was still unborn; yet Amos, as peremptorily, renews the sentence. In rejecting these, whereon the atonement was made, God pronounced them out of covenant with Himself. Heresy makes itself as like as it can to the truth, but is thereby the more deceiving, not the less deadly. Amos mentions the altars of Bethel, as well as the altar. Jeroboam made but one altar, keeping as close as he could to the divine ritual. But false worship and heresy ever hold their course, developing themselves. They never stand still where they began, but spread, like a cancer (^{<51217>}2 Timothy 2:17). It is a test of heresy, like leprosy, that it spreads abroad (Leviticus 13), preying on what at first seemed sound. The oneness of the altar had relation to the Unity of God. In Samaria, they worshiped, they know not what (^{<4312>}John 4:22), not God, but some portion of His manifold operations. The many altars, forbidden as they were, were more in harmony with the religion of

Jeroboam, even because they were against God's law. Heresy develops, becoming more consistent, by having less of truth.

Amos 3:15. *And I will smite the winter house with the summer house*
 Upon idolatry, there follow luxury and pride. "So wealthy were they," says Jerome, "as to possess two sorts of houses, "the winter house" being turned to the south, the "summer house" to the north, so that, according to the variety of the seasons, they might temper to them the heat and cold." Yet of these luxuries, (so much more natural in the East where summer-heat is so intense, and there is so little provision against cold) the only instance expressly recorded, besides this place, is "the winter house" (²⁸⁷²Jeremiah 36:22. Eglon, king of Moab, had only "a cool upper room," ¹⁰²⁴Judges 3:24) of Jehoiakim. In Greece (Xen. Mem. iii. 8. 9) and Rome (Pall de re rust; i. 8), the end was attained, as with us, by north and south rooms in the same house. These, which Amos rebukes, were like our town and country houses, separate residences, since they were to be destroyed, one on the other. "Ivory houses" were houses, paneled, or inlaid, with ivory. Such a palace Ahab built (¹²²⁹1 Kings 22:39). Even Solomon "in all his glory" had but an ivory throne (¹¹⁰⁸1 Kings 10:18). Else "ivory palaces" (³⁸¹⁸Psalms 45:8) are only mentioned, as part of the symbolic glory of the King of glory, the Christ. He adds, "and the great (or many) houses shall have an end, saith the Lord." So prosperous were they in outward show, when Amos foretold their destruction. The desolation should be wide as well as mighty. All besides should pass away, and the Lord alone abide in that Day. (Cyril):

"What then shall we, if we would be right-minded, learn hence? How utterly nothing will all earthly brightness avail, all wealth, glory, or ought besides of luxury, if the love of God is lacking, and righteousness be not prized by us! For "treasures of wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death" (²⁰⁰²Proverbs 10:2).

NOTES ON AMOS 4

Amos 4:1. *Hear ye this, ye kine of Bashan* The pastures of Bashan were very rich, and it had its name probably from its richness of soil.^{f186} The Batanea of later times was a province only of the kingdom of Bashan, which, with half of Gilead, was given to the half tribe of Manasseh. For the Bashan of Og included Golan (^{<6048>}Deuteronomy 4:43), (the capital of the subsequent Gaulonitis, now Jaulan) Beeshterah (^{<6217>}Joshua 21:27), (or Ashtaroth) (^{<1367>}1 Chronicles 6:71), very probably Bostra (see ab. on ^{<3012>}1 Chronicles 1:12), and Elrei (^{<6004>}Deuteronomy 1:4), in Hauran or Auranitis; the one on its southern border, the other perhaps on its northern boundary toward Trachonitis (Five Years, ii. 220-3). Its eastern extremity at Salkah (^{<6810>}Deuteronomy 3:10; ^{<6651>}Joshua 13:11), (Sulkhad) (Five Years, ii. 184-8. “Szalkhat” Burekh. Syr. 99) is the southern point of Batanea (now Bathaniyyeh); Argob, or Trachonitis (Five Years, ii. 268-72; 240-3), (the Lejah) was its north eastern fence. Westward it reached to Mount Hermon (^{<6808>}Deuteronomy 3:8; ^{<6626>}Joshua 12:5; 13:11; ^{<6823>}1 Chronicles 5:23). It included the subsequent divisions, Gaulonitis, Auranitis, Batanea, and Trachonitis. Of these the mountain range on the northwest of Jaulan is still (Five Years, ii. 259) “everywhere clothed with oak-forests.” The Ard-el-Bathanyeh (Ibid. 267; add. 57,8,67,133), “the country of Batanea or Bashan, is not surpassed in that land for beauty of its scenery, the richness of its pastures, and the extent of its oak forests.” “The Arabs of the desert still pasture their flocks on the luxuriant herbage of the Jaulan” (Porter, Handbook, 460, 2. On the Jebel Hauran, see Burekh. Syr. 309). Its pastures are spoken of by Micah (^{<3074>}Micah 7:14) and Jeremiah (^{<2819>}Jeremiah 50:19). The animals fed there were among the strongest and fattest (^{<6524>}Deuteronomy 32:14). Hence, the male animals became a proverb for the mighty on the earth (^{<6298>}Exodus 39:18), the bulls furnished a type for fierce, unfeeling, enemies (^{<6921>}Psalms 22:12). Amos however, speaks of “kine;” not, as David, of “bulls.” He upbraids them not for fierceness, but for a more delicate and wanton unfeelingness, the fruit of luxury, fullness of bread, a life of sense, which destroy all tenderness, dull the mind, “banker out the wits,” deaden the spiritual sense.

The female name, “kine,” may equally brand the luxury and effeminacy of the rich men, or the cruelty of the rich women, of Samaria. He addresses these “kine” in both sexes, both male and female.^{f187} The reproachful name

was then probably intended to shame both; men, who laid aside their manliness in the delicacy of luxury; or ladies, who put off the tenderness of womanhood by oppression. The character of the oppression was the same in both cases. It was done, not directly by those who revelled in its fruits, but through the seduction of one who had authority over them. To the ladies of Samaria, “their lord” was their husband, as the husband is so called; to the nobles of Samaria, he was their king, who supplied their extravagances and debaucheries by grants, extorted from the poor.

Which oppress Literally, “the oppressing!” The word expresses that they habitually oppressed and crushed the poor. They did it not directly; perhaps they did not know that it was done; they sought only, that their own thirst for luxury and self-indulgence should be gratified, and knew not, (as those at ease often know not now,) that their luxuries are continually watered by the tears of the poor, tears shed, almost unknown except by the Maker of both. But He counts willful ignorance no excuse. “He who doth through another, doth it himself,” said the pagan proverb. God says, they did “oppress,” were “continually oppressing, those in low estate,” and “crushing the poor” (a word is used expressing the vehemence with which they “crushed” them.) They “crushed” them, only through the continual demand of pleasures of sense, reckless how they were procured; “bring and let us drink.” They invite their husband or lord to joint self-indulgence.

<sup>3101>Amos 4:2. *The Lord God hath sworn by His holiness* They had sinned to profane His “Holy Name” (see the note at ^{<3101>}Amos 2:7). God swears by that holiness which they had profaned in themselves on whom it was called, and which they had caused to be profaned by others. He pledges His own holiness, that He will avenge their unholiness. (From Lap. who applies it to princes and judges):

“In swearing “by His holiness,” God sware by Himself. For He is the supreme uncreated justice and Holiness. This justice each, in his degree, should imitate and maintain on earth, and these had sacrilegiously violated and overthrown.”

Days shall come (literally, are among) upon you God’s Day and eternity are ever coming. He reminds them of their continual approach. He says not only that they WILL certainly come, but they ARE ever COMING. They are holding on their steady course. Each day which passes, they advance a day closer upon the sinner. People put out of their minds what “will come;” they “put far the evil day.” Therefore, God so often in His notices of woe

to come, (~~1023~~ 1 Samuel 2:31; ~~2306~~ Isaiah 39:6; ~~2072~~ Jeremiah 7:32; 9:25; 17:14; 19:6; 23:5,7; 30:3; 31:27-31,38; 33:14; 48:12; 49:2; 51:47,52. (Ges.); ~~1081~~ Amos 8:11), brings to mind, that those “days are” ever “coming” (Ibid.); they are not a thing which shall be only; in God’s purpose, they already “are;” and with one uniform steady noiseless tread “are coming upon” the sinner. Those “days shall come upon you,” heavily charged with the displeasure of God, crushing you, as ye have crushed the poor. They come doubtless, too, unexpectedly upon them, as our Lords says, “and so that day come upon you unwares.”

He (that is one) will take you away In the midst of their security, they should on a sudden be taken away violently from the abode of their luxury, as the fish, when hooked, is lifted out of the water. The image pictures (see ~~3015~~ Habakkuk 1:15; ~~3204~~ Ezekiel 29:4,5,) their utter helplessness, the contempt in which they would be had, the ease with which they would be lifted out of the flood of pleasures in which they had immersed themselves. People can be reckless, at last, about themselves, so that their POSTERITY escape, and they themselves survive in their offspring. Amos foretells, then, that these also should be swept away.

~~1048~~ **Amos 4:3.** *Ye shall go out through the breaches* Samaria, the place of their ease and confidence, being broken through, they should go forth one by one, “each straight before her,” looking neither to the right nor to the left, as a herd of cows go one after the other through a gap in a fence. Help and hope have vanished, and they hurry pell-mell after one another, reckless and desperate, as the animals whose life of sense they had chosen.

And ye shall cast them into the palace Or, better, (since nothing has been named which they could cast) “cast yourselves.” The word may describe the headlong motion of the animal, and the desperate gestures of the hopeless. They should cast themselves from palace to palace, from the palace of their luxuries to the palace of their enemies, from a self-chosen life of sensuousness to he concubines in the harem. If the rulers are still included, it was reserved for the rich and noble to become eunuchs in the palace of their Assyrian or Babylonian conquerors, as Isaiah foretold to Hezekiah (~~2307~~ Isaiah 39:7). It is another instance of that great law of God, “wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same shall he be tormented” (Wisdom 11:16). They had lived in luxury and wantonness; in luxury and wantonness they should live, but amid the jealousies of an Eastern harem, and at the caprice of their sensual conquerors.

The word however rendered, “to the palace,” occurring only here, is obscure. The other most probable conjecture is, that it is a name of a country, “the mountains of Monah,” that is, perhaps Armenia. This would describe accurately enough the country to which they were to be carried; “beyond Damascus; the cities of the Medes.” The main sense is the same. They should be cast forth from the scene of their pleasures and oppression, to be themselves oppressed. The whole image is one, which an inspired prophet alone could use. The reproof was not from man, but from God, unveiling their sins to them in their true hideousness. Man thinks nothing of being more degraded than the brutes, so that he can hide from himself, that he is so.

^{<1004>}**Amos 4:4.** *Come to Beth-el and transgress* Having foretold their captivity, the prophet tries irony. But his irony is in bidding them go on to do, what they were doing earnestly, what they were set upon doing, and would not be withdrawn from. As Micaiah in irony, until adjured in the name of God, joined Ahab’s court-priests, bidding, him “go to Ramoth-Gilead” (^{<11215>}1 Kings 22:15), where he was to perish; or Elijah said to the priests of Baal, “Cry aloud, for he is a god” (^{<11827>}1 Kings 18:27); or our Lord, “Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers” (^{<1033>}Matthew 23:32); so Amos bids them do all they did, in their divided service of God, but tells them that to multiply all such service was to multiply transgression. Yet they were diligent in their way. Their offerings were daily, as at Jerusalem; the tithes of the third year for the poor was paid, as God had ordained (^{<6143>}Deuteronomy 14:28; 26:12). They were punctual in these parts of the ritual, and thought much of their punctuality. So well did they count themselves to stand with God, that there is no mention of sin offering or trespass offering. Their sacrifices were “sacrifices of thanksgiving” and “free will offerings,” as if out of exuberance of devotion, such as David said that Zion would “offer,” when God had been “favorable and gracious unto” her (^{<45113>}Psalms 51:18,19). These things they did; they “proclaimed” and “published” them, like the hypocrites whom our Lord reproves, “sounding a trumpet before them” (^{<4012>}Matthew 6:2) when they did alms; proclaiming these private offerings, as God bade proclaim the solemn assemblies. “For so ye love.” They did it, because they liked it, and it cost them nothing, for which they cared. It was more than most Christians will sacrifice, two fifteenths of their yearly income, if they gave the yearly tithes, which were to be shared with the poor also. But they would not sacrifice what God, above all, required, the fundamental breach of God’s law, on which their

kingdom rested, “the sin which Jeroboam made Israel to sin.” They did what they liked; they were pleased with it, and they had that pleasure for their only reward, as it is of all which is not done for God.

<OR15>Amos 4:5. *And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven* But amid this boastful service, all was self-will. In little or great, the calf-worship at Bethel, or the use of leaven in the sacrifice, they did as they willed. The prophet seems to have joined purposely the fundamental change, by which Jeroboam substituted the worship of nature for its God, and a minute alteration of the ritual, to show that one and the same temper, self-will, reigned in all, dictated all they did. The use of leaven in the things sacrificed was forbidden, out of a symbolic reason, that is, not in itself, but as representing something else. The Eastern leaven, like that used in France, consisting of what is sour, had the idea of decay and corruption connected with it. Hence, it was unfit to be offered to God. For whatever was the object of any sacrifice, whether of atonement or thanksgiving, perfection in its kind was essential to the idea of offering. Hence, it was expressly forbidden.

“No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven, for ye shall burn no leaven in an offering of the Lord made by fire” (<OR11>Leviticus 2:11; add. <OR17>Leviticus 6:17).

At other times it is expressly commanded, that “unleavened bread” should be used. In two cases only, in which the offering was not to be burned, were offerings to be made of leavened bread:

- (1) the two loaves of first-fruits at Pentecost (<OR217>Leviticus 23:17), and
- (2) an offering with which the thank offering was accompanied, and which was to be the priest’s (<OR13>Leviticus 7:13,14).

The special meat offering of the thank offering was to be without leaven (<OR12>Leviticus 7:12). To “offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven” was a direct infringement of God’s appointment. It proceeded from the same frame of mind, as the breach of the greatest. Self-will was their only rule. What they willed, they kept; and what they willed, they brake. Amos bids them then go on, as they did in their willfulness, breaking God’s commands of set purpose, and keeping them by accident.

Rup.:

“This is a most grave mode of speaking, whereby He now saith, ‘Come and do so and so, and He Himself who saith this, hateth those same deeds of theirs. He so speaketh, not as willing, but as abandoning not as inviting, but as expelling; not in exhortation but in indignation. He subjoins then, (as the case required,) ‘for so ye loved.’ As if He said, ‘I therefore say, ‘come to Bethel’ where is your god, your calf, because ‘so ye loved,’ and hitherto ye have come. I therefore say, ‘transgress,’ because ye do transgress, and ye will to transgress. I say, ‘come to Gilgal,’ where were idols (⁴⁰⁸⁹Judges 3:19, English margin) long before Jeroboam’s calves, because ye come and ye will to come. I say, ‘multiply transgressions,’ because ye do multiply it, and yet will to multiply it. I say, ‘bring your sacrifices,’ because ye offer them and ye will to offer them, to whom ye ought not. I say, ‘offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven,’ because ye so do, and ye will do it, leavened as ye are with ‘the old leaven of malice and wickedness,’ against the whole authority of the holy and spiritual law, which forbiddeth to offer in sacrifice anything leavened. This pleaseth your gods, that ye be leavened, and without ‘the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth’ (⁴¹⁸⁸1 Corinthians 5:8). To them then ‘sacrifice the sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven,’ because to Me ye, being sinners, cannot offer a seemly sacrifice of praise. And so doing, ‘proclaim and publish the free offerings,’ for so ye do, and so ye will to do, honoring the sacrifices which ye offer to your calves with the same names, whereby the authority of the law nameth those which are offered unto Me; ‘burnt offerings,’ and ‘peace offerings;’ and ‘proclaim’ them ‘with the sound of trumpet and harp, with timbrel and dancing, with strings and organ, upon the well turned cymbals and the loud cymbals’ (Psalm 150), that so ye may be thought to have sung louder and stronger than the tribe of Judah or the house of David in the temple of the Lord, because ye are more.’ All these things are said, not with the intention of one willing, but with the indignation of one forsaking, as in many other instances. As that which the same Lord said to His betrayer; ‘what thou doest, do quickly’ (⁴⁶³⁷John 13:27). And in the Revelations we read, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still’ (⁴⁶²¹Revelation 22:11). These things, and the rest of the like sort, are not the words of one commanding, or, of His own Will, conceding, but permitting and forsaking. ‘For He

was not ignorant, (Wisdom saith) (Wisdom 12:10) that they were a naughty generation, and their malice was inbred, and that their cogitation never would be changed.”

Proclaim and publish the free offerings (Dionysius):

“Account much of what ye offer to God, and think that ye do great things, as though ye honored God condignly, and were under no obligation to offer such gifts. The whole is said in irony. For some there are, who appreciate magnificently the gifts and services which they offer to God, and think they have attained to great perfection, as though they made an adequate return to the divine benefits, not weighing the infinite dignity of the Divine Majesty, the incomparable greatness of the divine benefits, the frailty of their own condition and the imperfection of their service. Against whom is that which the Saviour saith, ‘When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do’ (^{<2770>}Luke 17:10). Hence, David saith ‘all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.’ (^{<394>}1 Chronicles 19:14).”

^{<1016>}**Amos 4:6.** *And I, I too have given you* Such had been their gifts to God, worthless, because destitute of that which alone God requires of His creatures, a loving, simple, single-hearted, loyal obedience. So then God had but one gift which He could bestow, one only out of the rich storehouse of His mercies, since all besides were abused — chastisement. Yet this too is a great gift of God, a pledge of HIS love, who willed not that they should perish; an earnest of greater favors, had they used it. It is a great gift of God, that He should care for us, so as to chasten us. The chastisements too were no ordinary chastisements, but those which God forewarned in the law, that He would send, and, if they repented, He would, amid the chastisements, forgive. This famine God had sent everywhere, “in all their cities,” and “in all their places,” great and small. Israel thought that its calves, that is, nature, gave them these things. “She did not know,” God saith, “that I gave her corn and wine and oil,” but said, “These are my rewards that my lovers have given me” (^{<2018>}Hosea 2:8,12). In the powers and operations of “nature,” they forgot the God and Author of nature. It was then the direct corrective of this delusion, that God withheld those powers and functions of nature. So might israel learn, if it would, the vanity of its worship, from its fruitlessness. Some such great

famines in the time of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17; 18; ~~<1801>~~2 Kings 8:1-6) Scripture records; but it relates them, only when God visibly interposed to bring, or to remove, or to mitigate them. Amos here speaks of other famines, which God sent, as He foretold in the law, but which produced no genuine fruits of repentance.

And ye returned not unto Me He says not, that they “returned not at all,” but that they “returned not wholly, quite back to God” (see the note at ~~<2102>~~Joel 2:12, and the introduction to Amos). Nay the emphatic saying, “ye did not return quite to Me,” so as to reach Me, implies that they did, after a fashion, return. Israel’s worship was a half, halting (~~<1102>~~1 Kings 18:21), worship. But a half-worship is no worship; a half-repentance is no repentance; repentance for one sin or one set of sins is no repentance, unless the soul repent of all which it can recall wherein it displeased its God. God does not half-forgive; so neither must man half-repent. Yet of its one fundamental sin, the worship of nature for God, Israel would not repent. And so, whatever they did was not that entire repentance, upon which God, in the law, had promised forgiveness; repentance which stopped short of nothing but God.

~~<1012>~~**Amos 4:7.** *And I, I too have withholden the rain* Jerome, dwelling in Palestine, says, that “this rain, when “three months yet remained until harvest,” was the “latter rain,” of the very greatest necessity for the fields of Palestine and the thirsty ground, lest, when the blade is swelling into the crop, and gendering the wheat, it should dry up through lack of moisture. The time intended is the spring, at the end of April, whence, to the wheat-harvest, there remain three months, May, June, July.” “God withheld the rain that they might endure, not only lack of bread, but burning thirst and penury of drink also. For in these places, where we now live, all the water, except small fountains, is of cisterns; and if the wrath of God should withhold the rain, there is greater peril of thirst than of hunger, such its Scripture relates to have endured for three years and six months in the days of the prophet Elijah. And lest they should think that this had befallen their cities and people, by a law of nature, or the influence of the stars, or the variety of the seasons, He says, that He rained upon one city and its fields, and from another withheld the rain.”

This was a second visitation of God. First, a general famine, “in all their cities;” secondly, a discriminating visitation. “Nature” possesses no discrimination or power over her supplies. Seeming waste is one of the

mysteries of God in nature, “to cause it to rain on the earth” (~~1836~~ Job 38:26) where “no man” is; on “the wilderness wherein” there, “is no man.” Ordinarily too, God

“maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (~~4155~~ Matthew 5:45).

But God does not enslave Himself, (as people would have it) to His own laws. Amos appeals to them, that God had dealt with them, not according to His ordinary laws; that not only God had given to one city the rain which he had withheld from another, but that He had made the same difference as to smaller “pieces” of ground, the inherited “portions” of individuals (“the portion of ground, belonging to one,” ~~6521~~ Deuteronomy 33:21; ~~8013~~ Ruth 2:3; 4:3; ~~10440~~ 2 Samuel 14:30,31; ~~11121~~ 2 Kings 9:21,25). Some such variations have been observed in Palestine now. (Thomson, The land, ii. 66) But this would have been no indication of God’s Providence, had not the consciences of people responded to the prophet’s appeal, and recognized that the rain had been given or withheld according to the penitence or impenitence, the deeper or more mitigated idolatry, the greater or less sinfulness of the people. We have, then, in these few words a law of God’s dealing with Israel. God, in His word, reveals to us the meaning of His daily variations in the workings of nature; yet, hardly even in such instances, as people can scarcely elude, do they think of God the Creator, rather than of NATURE, His creation.

~~3108~~ **Amos 4:8.** *Two or three cities wandered into one city* Those then who were punished, were more than those who were reprieved. The word “wandered” literally, “trembled,” expresses the unsteady reeling gait of those exhausted, in quest of food (~~15915~~ Psalm 59:15; 109:10; of one blind, ~~2554~~ Lamentations 5:14). They staggered through weakness, and uncertain, amid the general drought, whither to betake themselves. This was done, not in punishment but to heal. God paused, in order to give them opportunity to repent; in deed, His long-suffering only showed to themselves and to others, that they would not; “and ye returned not not Me; saith the Lord.”

~~3109~~ **Amos 4:9.** *I have smitten you with blasting* Literally, “an exceeding scorching,” such as the hot east wind produced, and “an exceeding mildew,” a blight, in which the ears turn untimely a pale yellow, and have no grain. Both words are doubly intensive. They stand together in the

prophecy of Moses (^{<1632>}Deuteronomy 28:22), among the other scourges of disobedience; and the mention of these would awaken, in those who would hear, the memory of a long train of other warnings and other judgments.

When your gardens ... increased Better, as English margin. “the multitude of your gardens.” The garden of the east united the orchard (^{<8816>}Job 8:16; ^{<2043>}Song of Solomon 4:13,14; 6:11), herb (^{<6110>}Deuteronomy 11:10; ^{<2044>}Song of Solomon 4:14; 6:2), and flower garden. It comprised what was necessary for use as well as what was fragrant. It furnished part of their support (^{<3044>}Amos 9:14; ^{<2475>}Jeremiah 29:5,28). Its trees (^{<2006>}Ecclesiastes 2:6), as well as the garden (^{<2045>}Song of Solomon 4:15; Eccclus. 24:30) generally, being mostly watered artificially, it was beyond the reach of ordinary drought. The tree, “planted by the channels of waters” (^{<3008>}Psalms 1:3; ^{<2478>}Jeremiah 17:8; add ^{<2881>}Isaiah 58:11; ^{<2812>}Jeremiah 31:12, contrariwise ^{<2003>}Isaiah 1:30), was an image of abiding freshness and fertility, Yet neither would these escape God’s sentence. On these He sent the locusts, which, in a few hours — all leaves — flower, herb or tree, are as dead (see the note at ^{<2007>}Joel 1:7, p. 106).

^{<3040>}**Amos 4:10.** *I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt* that is, after the way in which God had dealt with Egypt.^{f188} God had twice promised, when the memory of the plagues which He sent on Egypt was still fresh

“if thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God — I will put none of the diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians” (^{<2156>}Exodus 15:26; ^{<1675>}Deuteronomy 7:15).

Contrariwise, God had forewarned them in that same prophecy of Moses, that, if they disobeyed Him,

“He will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt which thou was afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee” (^{<1630>}Deuteronomy 28:60, add ^{<1637>}Deuteronomy 28:27).

Egypt was, at times, subject to great visitations of the plague;^{f189} it is said to be its birthplace (Prosp. Alp. rer. AEG. i. 19. Win.). Palestine was by nature healthy. Hence, and on account of the terribleness of the scourge, God so often speaks of it, as of His own special sending. He had threatened in the law; “I will sold a pestilence upon you” (^{<1825>}Leviticus 26:25);

“the Lord thy God will make the pestilence cleave unto you”
 (<1632>Deuteronomy 28:21).

Jeremiah says to the false prophet Hananiah;

“The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries and against great kingdoms, of war and of evil and of pestilence” (<2438>Jeremiah 28:8).

Amos bears witness that those visitations came. Jeremiah (<2442>Jeremiah 14:12; 29:17,18; 34:17) and Ezekiel (<2452>Ezekiel 5:12; 6:11, etc.) prophesied them anew, together with the sword and with famine. Israel, having sinned like Egypt, was to be punished like Egypt.

And have taken away your horses Literally, as English margin. “with the captivity of your horses.” After famine, drought, locust, pestilence, followed that worst scourge of all, that through man. The possessions of the plain of Jezreel, so well suited for cavalry, probably induced Israel to break in this respect the law of Moses. Hazael “left to Jehoahaz but 50 horsemen and 10 chariots and 10,000 footmen, for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing.” Their armies, instead of being a defense, lay unburied on the ground, a fresh source of pestilence.

<3011>**Amos 4:11.** *I have overthrown some of you* The earthquake is probably reserved to the last, as being the rarest, and so the most special, visitation. Frequent as earthquakes have been on the borders of Palestine, the greater part of Palestine was not on the line, which was especially shaken by them. The line, chiefly visited by earthquakes, was along the coast of the Mediterranean or parallel to it, chiefly from Tyre to Antioch and Aleppo. Here were the great historical earthquakes, which were the scourges of Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Botrys, Tripolis, Laodicea on the sea; which shattered Litho-prosopon, prostrated Baalbek and Hamath, and so often afflicted Antioch and Aleppo,^{f190} while Damascus was mostly spared (Ritter, xvii. 1315). Eastward it may have reached to Safed, Tiberias, and the Hauran. Ar-Moab perished by an earthquake in the childhood of Jerome (Jerome on Isaiah 15). But, at least, the evidence of earthquakes, except perhaps in the ruins of the Hauran,^{f191} is slighter. Earthquakes there have been (although fewer) at Jerusalem. Yet on the whole, it seems truer to say that the skirts of Palestine were subject to destructive earthquakes, than to affirm this of central Palestine.^{f192}

The earthquake must have been all the more terrible, because it was unprecedented. One or more terrible earthquakes, overthrowing cities, must have been sent, before that, on occasion of which Amos collected his prophecies. For his prophecies were uttered “two years before” that “earthquake;” and this earthquake had preceded his prophecy. “I overthrew,” God says, “among you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” He uses the word, especially used by Moses and the prophets of that dread overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, when they were turned, as it were, upside down. The earthquake is at all times the more mysterious, because unseen, unannounced, unlooked for, instantaneous, complete. The ground under a man’s feet seems no longer secure: his shelter is his destruction; men’s houses become their graves. Whole cities must have been utterly overthrown, for He compares the overthrow worked AMONG them, to the overthrow of “the cities of the plain.” Other visitations have heralds sent before them. War, pestilence, famine, seldom break in at once. The earthquake at once, buries, it may be, thousands or tens of thousands, each stiffened (if it were so) in that his last deed of evil; each household with its own form of misery; each in its separate vault, dead, dying, crushed, imprisoned; the remnant indeed “surviving,” for most whom they loved were gone. So he says;

And ye, who escaped, were as a firebrand, plucked out of the burning

Once it had been green, fresh, fragrant, with leaf or flower; now scorched, charred, blackened, all but consumed. In itself, it was fit for nothing, but to be cast back into the fire from where it had been rescued. Man would so deal with it. A re-creation alone could restore it. Slight emblem of a soul, whose freshness sin had withered, then God’s severe judgment had half-consumed; in itself, meet only for the everlasting fire, from which yet God withdraws it.

~~<OH>~~ **Amos 4:12.** *Therefore thus will I do unto thee* God says more by His silence. He had enumerated successive scourges. Now, with His hand uplifted to strike, He mentions none, but says, “thus.” Rib.: “So men too, loth to name evils, which they fear and detest, say, “God do so to me, and more also.” God using the language of people” Jerome, “having said, ‘thus will I do unto thee,’ is silent as to what He will do; that so, Israel hanging in suspense, as having before him each sort of punishment (which are the more terrible, because he imagines them one by one), may indeed repent, that God inflict not what He threatens.”

Prepare to meet thy God In judgment, face to face, final to them. All the judgments which had been sent hitherto were but heralds, forerunners of the judgment to come. He Himself was not in them. In them, He passed no sentence upon Israel. They were medicinal, corrective; they were not His final sentence. Now, having tried all ways of recovering them in vain, God summons them before His tribunal. But although the judgment of the ten tribes, as a whole, was final, to individuals there was place for repentance. God never, in this life, bids people or individuals “prepare to meet Him,” without a purpose of good to those who do prepare to receive His sentence aright. He saith not then, “come and hear your doom,” but “prepare to meet thy God.” It has hope in it, to be bidden to “prepare;” yet more, that He whom they were to prepare to meet, was “their God.” It must have recurred full often to the mind of the ten tribes during their unrestored captivity of above seven centuries before the Coming of our Lord; a period as long as the whole existence of Rome from its foundation to its decay; as long as our history from our king Stephen until now. Full oft must they have thought, “we have not met Him yet,” and the thought must have dawned upon them; “It is because He willed to “do thus” with us, that He bid us “prepare to meet” Him. He met us not, when He did it. It was then something further on; it is in the Messiah that we are to meet and to see Him.” Jerome: “Prepare to meet thy God,” receiving with all eagerness the Lord coming unto thee.” So then, is this further sense which lay in a the words (Rib.),

“he (as did Hosea at the end) exhorts the ten tribes, after they had been led captive by the Assyrians, not to despond, but to “prepare to meet their God,” that is, to acknowledge and receive Christ their God, when the Gospel should be preached to them by the Apostles.”

Rib.:

“God punisheth, not in cruelty, but in love. He warns then those whom He strikes, to understand what He means by these punishments, not thinking themselves abandoned by God, but, even when they seem most cast away and reprobate, rousing themselves, in the hope of God’s mercy through Christ, to call upon God, and “prepare to meet their God.” For no one’s salvation is so desperate, no one is so stained with every kind of sin, but that God cometh to him by holy inspirations, to bring back the wanderer to Himself.

Thou therefore, O Israel, whoever thou art, who didst once serve God, and now servest vilest pleasures, when thou feelest God coming to thee, prepare to meet Him. Open the door of thy heart to that most kind and benevolent Guest, and, when thou hearest His Voice, deafen not thyself: flee not, like Adam. For He seeketh thee, not to judge, but to save thee.”

<THE> Amos 4:13. *For lo, He that formeth the mountains* Their God whom they worshiped was but nature. Amos tells them, who “their God” is, whom they were to prepare to meet. He describes Him as the Creator of that, which to man seems most solid, to go furthest back in times past. Before the everlasting mountains were, God IS, for He made them. Yet God is not a Creator in the past alone. He is a continual Worker. “And formeth the wind,” that finest subtlest creature, alone invisible in this visible world; the most immaterial of things material, the breath of our life, the image of man’s created immaterial spirit, or even of God’s uncreated presence, the mildest and the most terrific of the agents around us. But the thought of God, as a Creator or Preserver without, affects man but little. To man, a sinner, far more impressive than all majesty of Creative power, is the thought that God knows his inmost soul. So he adds; “and declareth unto man what is his thought,” that is, his meditation, before he puts it into words. God knows our thoughts more truly than we ourselves. We disguise them to ourselves, know not our own hearts, wish not to know them. God reveals us to ourselves. As He says,

“The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings”
 (<HTB>Jeremiah 17:9,10).

Man’s own conscience tells him that God’s knowledge of His inmost self is no idle knowledge.

“If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things” (<HTB>1 John 3:20).

That maketh the morning darkness If the light become darkness, how great that darkness! From the knowledge of man’s heart, the prophet goes on to retribution. Morning is the symbol of all which is beautiful, cheering, radiant, joyous to man; darkness effaces all these. Their God, he tells them, can do all this. He can quench in gloom all the magnificent beauty of His

own creation and make all which gladdened the eyes of man, “one universal blot.” “And treadeth upon the high places of the earth.” He “treadeth” them, to tread them under. He humbleth all which exalteth itself. “God walketh, when He worketh. He is without all, within all, containeth all, worketh all in all. Hence, it is said, “He walketh on the wings of the wind (^{<B44B>}Psalm 104:3); He walketh on the heights of the sea (^{<B44B>}Job 9:8); He walketh on the circuit of heaven” (^{<B214>}Job 22:14).

Such was He, who made Himself “their God,” The Author of all, the Upholder of all, the Subduer of all which exalted itself, who stood in a special relation to man’s thoughts, and who punished. At His command stand all the hosts of heaven. Would they have Him for them, or against them? Would they be at peace with Him, before they met Him, face to face?

NOTES ON AMOS 5

<118> Amos 5:1. In order to impress Israel the more, Amos begins this his third appeal by a “dirge” over its destruction, mourning over those who were full of joy, and thought themselves safe and enviable. As if a living man, in the midst of his pride and luxury and buoyant recklessness of heart, could see his own funeral procession, and hear, as it were, over himself the “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” It would give solemn thoughts, even though he should impatiently put them from him. So must it to Israel, when after the tide of victories of Jeroboam II, Amos said, “Hear this word which I am lifting up,” as a heavy weight, to cast it down “against” or “upon you,” a funeral “dirge,” O house of Israel. Human greatness is so unstable, human strength so fleeting, that the prophet of decay finds a response in man’s own conscience, however he may silence or resent it. He would not resent it, unless he felt its force.

Dionysius

“Amos, an Israelite, mourneth over Israel, as Samuel did over Saul (^{<155>}1 Samuel 15:35), or as Isaiah says, “I will weep bitterly; labor not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people” (^{<270>}Isaiah 22:4); images of Him who wept over Jerusalem.” “So are they bewailed, who know not why they are bewailed, the more miserable, because they know not their own misery.”

<118> Amos 5:2. *She hath fallen, she shall rise no more, the virgin of Israel; she hath been dashed down upon her land, there is none to raise her up* Such is the dirge, a dirge like that of David over Saul and Jonathan, over what once was lovely and mighty, but which had perished. He speaks of all as past, and that, irremediably. Israel is one of the things which had been, and which would never again be. He calls her tenderly, “the virgin of Israel,” not as having retained her purity or her fealty to God; still less, with human boastfulness, as though she had as yet been unsubdued by man. For she had been faithless to God, and had been many times conquered by man. Nor does it even seem that God so calls her, because He once espoused her to Himself For Isaiah so calls Babylon. But Scripture seems to speak of cities, as women, because in women tenderness is most seen;

they are most tenderly guarded; they, when pure, are most lovely; they, when corrupted, are most debased. Hence (from Rib.),

“God says on the one hand, “I remember thee, the love of thine espousals” (^{241E}Jeremiah 2:2); on the other, “Hear, thou harlot, the word of the Lord” (^{246E}Ezekiel 16:35). When He claims her faithfulness He calls her, betrothed.”

Again (from Rib.),

“when He willeth to signify that a city or nation has been as tenderly loved and anxiously guarded, whether by Himself or by others, He calleth it “virgin,” or when he would indicate its beauty and lovely array. Isaiah saith, ‘come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon’ (^{234E}Isaiah 47:1), that is, thou who livedest before in all delicacies, like a virgin under the shelter of her home. For it follows, ‘for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.’”

More pitiable, for their tenderness and delicacy, is the distress of women. And so he pictures her as already fallen, “dashed” (the word imitates the sound) to the earth “upon her own ground.” An army may be lost, and the nation recover. She was “dashed down upon her own ground.” In the abode of her strength, in the midst of her resources, in her innermost retreat, she should fall. In herself, she fell powerless. And he adds, she has “no one to raise her up;” none to have ruth upon her; image of the judgment on a lost soul, when the terrible sentence is spoken and none can intercede! “She shall not rise again.” As she fell, she did not again rise. The prophet beholds beyond the eighty-five years which separated the prosperity under Jeroboam II from her captivity. As a people, he says, she should be restored no more; nor was she.

^{218E}**Amos 5:3.** *The city that went out by a thousand* (that is, probably that sent out a thousand fighting men, as the word “went out” is often used for, “went out” to fight,) “shall have” literally, “shall retain, an hundred.” She was to be decimated. Only, the tenth alone was to be reserved alive; the nine-tenths were to be destroyed. And this, alike in larger places and in the small. The city “that went forth an hundred shall retain ten.” Smaller places escape for their obscurity, the larger from their strength and situation. One common doom was to befall all. Out of all that multitude, one tithe alone

was to be preserved (from Rib.), “dedicated to God,” that remnant which God always promised to reserve.

Amos 5:4. *Seek ye Me and ye shall live* Literally, “seek Me; and live.” Wonderful conciseness of the word of God, which, in two words, comprises the whole of the creature’s duty and his hopes, his time and his eternity. The prophet uses the two imperatives, in oneing both, man’s duty and his reward. He does not speak of them, as cause and effect, but as one. Where the one is, there is the other. To seek God is to live. For to seek God is to find Him, and God is Life and the Source of life. Forgiveness, grace, life, enter the soul at once. But the seeking is diligent seeking. (Dionysius):

“It is not to seek God anyhow, but as it is right and meet that He should be sought, longed for, prayed for, who is so great, a Good, constantly, fervently, yea, to our power, the more constantly and fervently, as an Infinite Good is more to be longed for, more loved than all created good.

The object of the search is God Himself. “Seek Me,” that is, seek God for Himself, not for anything out of Him, not for His gifts, not for anything to be loved with Him. This is not to seek Him purely. All is found in Him, but by seeking Him first, and then loving Him in all, and all in Him. “And ye shall live,” first by the life of the body, escaping the enemy; then by the life of grace now, and the life of glory hereafter, as in that of the Psalmist, “your heart shall live who seek God” (¹⁹⁸⁸Psalm 69:32).

Amos 5:5. *But (and) seek not Bethel* Israel pretended to seek God in Bethel. Amos sets the two seeking, as incompatible. The god, worshiped at Bethel, was not the One God. To seek God there was to lose Him. “Seek not God,” he would say, “and a phantom, which will lead from God.”

And pass not to Beersheba Jeroboam I pretended that it was too much for Israel to go up to Jerusalem. And Yet Israel thought it not too much to go to the extremest point of Judah toward Idumaea (Josephus, Ant. 8. 13. 7), perhaps, four times as far south of Jerusalem, as Jerusalem lay from Bethel. For Beersheba is thought to have lain some thirty miles south of Hebron (Robinson, i. 206. Eusebius and Jerome have twenty), which is twenty-two miles south of Jerusalem (Euseb. Jerome, v. Arbo.); while Bethel is but twelve to the north. So much pains will people take in self-willed service, and yet not see that it takes away the excuse for neglecting the true. At

Beersheba, Abraham “called upon the name of the Lord, the everlasting God” (^{<0213>}Genesis 21:33). There God revealed Himself to Isaac and Jacob (^{<0223>}Genesis 26:23,24; 46:1). There, because He had so revealed Himself, Judah made a place of idolatry, which Israel, seeking nought besides from Judah, sought. Beersheba was still a town (Jerome, Qu. ad ^{<0223>}Genesis 22:30) or large village (de loc. Hebr.) in the time of Jerome. Now all is swept away, except (Van de Velde, ii. 127) “some foundations of ruins,” spread over 3/4 of a mile, “with scarcely one stone upon another” (Robinson, i. 204). The wells alone remain,^{f193} with the ancient names.

Gilgal shall surely go into captivity The verbal allusions in the prophets are sometimes artificial; sometimes, they develop the meaning of the word itself, as when Zephaniah says, “Ekron (probably the “firm-rooting”) “shall be uprooted” (^{<3114>}Zephaniah 2:4); sometimes, as here, the words are connected, although not the same. In all cases, the likeness of sound was calculated to fix them in men’s memories. It would be so, if one with authority could say, “Paris perira” (instanced by Mercier here), “Paris shall perish” or “London is undone.” Still more would the words, Hag-gilgal galo yigleh, because the name Gilgal still retained its first meaning, “the great rolling (The article is prefixed to proper names, which are still in a degree appellatives), and the word joined with it had a kindred meaning. Originally it probably means, “swept clear away.” God first “rolled away the reproach of Egypt” (^{<0119>}Joshua 5:9) from His people there. Then, when it made itself like the pagan, it should itself be rolled clear away (^{<2512>}Jeremiah 51:25). Gilgal was originally in Benjamin, but Israel had probably annexed it to itself, as it had Bethel and Jericho (^{<1163>}1 Kings 16:34), both of which had been assigned by Joshua to Benjamin (^{<0182>}Joshua 18:21,22).

And Bethel shall come to nought Hosea had called “Bethel, God’s house,” by the name of “Bethaven” (^{<2045>}Hosea 4:15; 10:5), Vanity-house.” Amos, in allusion to this probably, drops the first half of the name, and says that it shall not merely be “house of vanity,” but “Aven, vanity” itself. “By sin the soul, which was the house or temple of God, becomes the temple of vanity and of devils.”

^{<3116>}**Amos 5:6.** *Seek ye the Lord and ye shall live* Literally, “seek the Lord and live;” being united to Him, the Fountain of life. He reimpresses on them the one simple need of the creature, “seek God,” the one true God as He revealed Himself, not as worldly people, or the politicians of

Jeroboam's court, or the calf-priests, fabled of Him. "Seek Him." For in Him is all; without Him, nothing.

Lest He break out like fire in Bethel Formerly the Spirit of God came vehemently down (The same word is used in all these places) upon Sansom (^{<0746>}Judges 14:6,19; 15:14) and Saul (^{<0906>}1 Samuel 10:6; 11:6) and David (^{<0163>}1 Samuel 16:13), to fit them as instruments for God; as did the Evil spirit, when God departed from Saul (^{<0930>}1 Samuel 18:10). So now, unless they repented, God Himself would suddenly show His powerful presence among them, but, as He had revealed Himself to be, "the, Lord thy God is a consuming Fire" (^{<0805>}Deuteronomy 4:24). "And devour" it, literally, "and it" (the fire) "shall devour, and" there be "none to quench" it "in" (better, "for") Bethel." Bethel, the center of their idol-hopes, so far from aiding them then, shall not be able to help itself, nor shall there be any to help it. The fire of God kindles around it, and there is none to quench it for her (as in ^{<3004>}Jeremiah 4:4).

Montanus:

"The whole place treateth of mercy and justice. The whole ground of people's punishment, calamities, condemnation is ascribed to their own fault and negligence, who neglect the deliverance often promised and offered them by God, and 'love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil' (^{<0819>}John 3:19). Whoever is not saved, the whole blame lies in their own will and negligence and malice. God, who 'willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (^{<0609>}2 Peter 3:9), Himself unsought, seeks, entreats, ceases not to monish, exhort, set before them their guilt, that they may cease to prepare such evil for themselves. But they neither give Him entrance, nor hear His entreaties, nor admit the warnings of the divine mercy, which if they neglect, they must needs be made over to His justice. The goodness of God is lacking to no one, save those who are wanting to themselves. Wherefore, having often besought them before, He invites them yet again to salvation, putting forth that His Name, so full of mysteries of mercy; 'Seek the Lord and live,'"

seek Him who IS, the Unchangeable. He who had willed their salvation, still willed it, for He "changes not" (^{<3006>}Malachi 3:6). "He adds threatenings, that those whom He calls to life, He might either allure by promises, or scare from death through fear of the impending evil."

<1191> **Amos 5:7.** *Ye who turn* Those whom he calls to seek God, were people filled with all injustice, who turned the sweetness of justice into the bitterness of wormwood (Jerome). Moses had used “gall” and “wormwood” as a proverb;

“lest there be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him” (<1191> Deuteronomy 29:18,20).

The word of Amos would remind them of the word of Moses.

And leave off righteousness in the earth Better, “and set righteousness to rest on the ground”.^{f194} They dethroned righteousness, the representative and vice-gerent of God, and made it rest on the ground. The “little horn,” Daniel says, should “cast truth to the ground” (<2182> Daniel 8:12). These seem to have blended outrage with insult, as when “the Lord our Righteousness” (<2431> Jeremiah 23:6) took our flesh, “they put on Him” the “scarlet robe, and the crown of thorns” upon His Head, and bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him,” and then “crucified Him.” They “deposed” her, “set her down,” it may be, with a mock make-believe deference, as people now-a-days, in civil terms, depose God, ignoring Him and His right over them. They set her on the ground and so left her, the image of God. This they did, not in one way only, but in all the ways in which they could. He does not limit it to the “righteousness” shown in doing justice. It includes all transactions between man and man, in which right enters, all buying and selling, all equity, all giving to another his due. All the bands of society were dissolved, and righteousness was placed on the ground, to be trampled on by all in all things.

<3191> **Amos 5:8.** *Seek Him that maketh the seven stars* Misbelief effaces the thought of God as He Isaiah It retains the name God, but means something quite different from the One True God. So people spoke of “the Deity,” as a sort of First Cause of all things, and did not perceive that they only meant to own that this fair harmony of things created was not (at least as it now exists,) self-existent, and that they had lost sight of the Personal God who had made known to them His Will, whom they were to believe in, obey, fear, love. “The Deity” was no object of fear or love. It was but a bold confession that they did not mean to be Atheists, or that they meant

intellectually to admire the creation. Such confessions, even when not consciously atheistic, become at least the parents of Atheism or Panotheism, and slide insensibly into either. For a First Cause, who is conceived of as no more, is an abstraction, not God. God IS the Cause of all causes. All things ARE, and have their relations to each other, as cause and effect, because He so created them. A “Great First Cause,” who is only thought of as a Cause, is a mere fiction of a man’s imagining, an attempt to appear to account for the mysteries of being, without owning that, since our being is from God, we are responsible creatures whom He created for Himself, and who are to yield to Him an account of the use of our being which He gave us. In like way, Israel had probably so mixed up the thought of God with Nature, that it had lost sight of God, as distinct from the creation. And so Amos, after appealing to their consciences, sets forth God to them as the Creator, Disposer of all things, and the Just God, who redresseth man’s violence and injustice. The “seven stars,” literally, “the heap,” are the striking cluster of stars, called by Greeks and Latins the Pleiades,^{f195} which consist of seven larger stars, and in all of above forty. Orion,^{f196} a constellation in one line with the Pleiades, was conceived by the Arabs and Syrians also, as a gigantic figure. The Chaldee also renders, the “violent” or “the rebel.” The Hebrew title “Keciyl, fool,” adds the idea of an irreligious man, which is also the meaning of Nimrod, “rebel,” literally, “let us rebel.” Job, in that he speaks of “the bands of Orion” (~~18381~~ Job 38:31), pictures him as “bound,” the “belt” being the “band.” This falls in with the later tradition, that Nimrod, who, as the founder of Babel, was the first rebel against God (~~01009~~ Genesis 10:9,10; 11:4-9. Josephus (Arch. i. 4. 2) does but develop Genesis), was represented by the easterns in their grouping of the stars, as a giant chained (Chronicles Pasch. p. 36), the same constellation which we call Orion.

And turneth the shadow of death into the morning This is no mere alternation of night and day, no “kindling” of “each day out of night.” The “shadow of death” is strictly the darkness of death, or of the grave (~~18185~~ Job 3:5; 10:21,22; 34:22; 38:17; ~~18234~~ Psalm 23:4; ~~24516~~ Jeremiah 13:16). It is used of darkness intense as the darkness of the grave (~~18283~~ Job 28:3), of gloom (~~18247~~ Job 24:17), or moral benighting (~~23102~~ Isaiah 9:2, (1 Hebrew)) which seems to cast “the shadow of death” over the soul, of distress which is as the forerunner of death (~~18166~~ Job 16:16; ~~19419~~ Psalm 44:19; 107:10,14; ~~24016~~ Jeremiah 2:6; 13:16), or of things, hidden as the grave, which God alone can bring to light (~~18122~~ Job 12:22). The word is united with darkness,

physical, moral, mental, but always as intensifying it, beyond any mere darkness. Amos first sets forth the power of God, then His goodness. Out of every extremity of ill, God can, will, does, deliver. He who said, “let there be light and there was light,” at once changeth any depth of darkness into light, the death-darkness of sin into the dawn of grace, the hopeless night of ignorance into “the day-star from on high,” the night of the grave into the eternal morn of the Resurrection which knoweth no setting. But then on impenitence the contrary follows;

And maketh the day dark with night Literally, “and darkeneth day into night.” As God withdraws “the shadow of death,” so that there should be no trace of it left, but all is filled with His light, so, again, when His light is abused or neglected, He so withdraws it, as at times, to leave no trace or gleam of it. Conscience becomes benighted, so as to sin undoubtingly: faith is darkened, so that the soul no more even suspects the truth. Hell has no light.

That calleth for the waters of the sea This can be no other than a memory of the flood, “when the waters prevailed over the earth” (^{<0074>}Genesis 7:24). The prophet speaks of nothing partial. He speaks of “sea” and “earth,” each, as a whole, standing against the other. “God calleth the waters of the sea and poureth them over the face of the earth.” They seem ever threatening the land, but for Him

“which hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea, that it cannot pass it” (^{<412>}Jeremiah 5:22).

Now God calls them, and “pours them over the face,” that is, the whole surface. The flood, He promised, should not again be. But it is the image of that universal destruction, which shall end man’s thousands of years of rebellion against God. The words then of Amos, in their simplest sense, speak of a future universal judgment of the inhabitants of the earth, like, in extent, to that former judgment, when God “brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly” (^{<615>}2 Peter 2:5).

The words have been thought also to describe that daily marvel of God’s Providence, how, from the salt briny sea, which could bring but barrenness, He, by the heat of the Sun, draws up the moisture, and discharges it anew in life-giving showers on the surface of the earth. God’s daily care of us, in the workings of His creatures is a witness (^{<447>}Acts 14:17) of His relation

to us as our Father; it is an earnest also of our relation, and so of our accountableness, to Him.

The Lord is His name He, the One Self-existent Unchangeable God, who revealed Himself to their forefathers, and forbade them to worship Him under any form of their own device.

^{<189>}**Amos 5:9.** *That strengtheneth the spoiled* (Literally, “spoil” English margin) probably That “maketh devastation to smile on the strong.”^{f197} The “smile,” in anger, attests both the extremity of anger, and the consciousness of the ease, wherewith the offence can be punished. They were strong in their own strength; strong, as they deemed, in their “fortress” (Rup.); “strong with an evil strength, like one phrensied against his physician.” But their strength would be weakness. “Desolation” when God willed, would “smile at” all which they accounted “might,” and would “come against the fortress,” which, as they deemed, “cut off” all approach.

^{<190>}**Amos 5:10.** *They hate him that rebuketh* “The gate” is the well-known place of concourse, where just or, in Israel now, unjust judgment was given (^{<627>}Deuteronomy 25:7; ^{<189>}Job 5:4; 31:21; ^{<189>}2 Samuel 15:2; ^{<122>}Proverbs 22:22; ^{<292>}Isaiah 29:21), where all was done which was to be done publicly (^{<801>}Ruth 4:1,11). Samaria had a large area by its chief gate, where two kings could hold court, and the 400 false prophets and the people, in great numbers, could gather (^{<1220>}1 Kings 22:10; ^{<1489>}2 Chronicles 18:9), and a market could be held (^{<1201>}2 Kings 7:1). Josiah brake down an idol-shrine, which was in one of the gates of Jerusalem (^{<1238>}2 Kings 23:8). The prophets seized the opportunity of finding the people together, and preached to them there. So it was even in the days of Solomon.

“Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates, in the city she uttereth her words, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? ...” (^{<1012>}Proverbs 1:20-22),

and again,

“She standeth in the top of high places, by the way, in the meeting of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors; Unto you, O men, I call,” (^{<189>}Proverbs 8:2-4).

Jeremiah mentions two occasions, upon which God bade him reprove the king and people in the gates of Jerusalem (^{<24179>}Jeremiah 17:19; 19:2). There doubtless Amos and Hosea reproved them, and, for reproving, were “hated.” As Isaiah says, “they lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate” (^{<2329>}Isaiah 29:21). They sinned publicly, and therefore they were to be rebuked publicly. They sinned “in the gate” by injustice and oppression, and therefore were to be “rebuked before all, that others also might fear” (^{<5480>}1 Timothy 5:20).

And they abhor him that speaketh uprightly Literally, “perfectly.” The prophets spoke “perfectly” (Lyr.),

“for they spoke the all-perfect word of God, of which David says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (^{<19807>}Psalm 19:7). “Carnal eyes hate the light of truth, which they cast aside for execrable lies, closing to themselves the fountain of the divine mercy”

(Lyr.). Rup.:

“This is the sin which hath no remission; this is the sin of the strong and mighty, who sin not out of ignorance or weakness, but with impenitent heart proudly defend their sin, and ‘hate him that rebuketh arid abhor him who’ dareth to ‘speak perfectly,’ that is, not things which please them, but resisting their evil.”

This, like all other good of God and evil of man, met most in and against Christ. Rup.:

“Who is he who ‘rebuked in the gate’ or who ‘spake perfectly?’ David rebuked them, and spake much perfectly, and so they hated him and said, ‘what portion have we in David, or what inheritance have we in the son of Jesse?’” (^{<11216>}1 Kings 12:16), Him also who spake these very words, and the other prophets they hated and abhorred. But as the rest, so this too, is truly and indubitably fulfilled in Christ, rebuking justly and speaking perfectly. He Himself saith in a Psalm, ‘They that sat in the gate spake against Me’ (^{<19912>}Psalm 69:12), wherefore, when He had said, ‘he that hateth Me hateth My Father also’ (^{<48153>}John 15:23-25), and, ‘now they have. both seen and hated both Me and My Father,’ He subjoined, ‘that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated Me without a cause.’ Above all then, we

understand Christ, whom they hated, ‘rebuking in the gate,’ that is, openly and in public; as He said, ‘I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing’ (<B181>John 18:20). He alone spake perfectly, ‘Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.’ (<A122>1 Peter 2:22). In wisdom also and doctrine, He alone spake perfectly, perfectly. and so wonderfully, that ‘the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees’ who were ‘sent to take, Him, said, Never man spake like this Man.’ (<B175>John 7:45,46).

Jerome:

“it is a great sin to hate him who rebuketh, especially if he rebuke thee, not out of dislike, but out of love, if he doth it ‘between thee and him alone (<A185>Matthew 18:15-17), if, taking with’ him a brother, if afterward, in the presence of the Church, so that it may be evident that he does not blame thee out of any love of detraction, but out of zeal for thine amendment.”

<A151> **Amos 5:11.** *Forasmuch therefore* (Since they rejected reproof, he pronounces the sentence of God upon them,) “as your treading is upon the poor.” This expresses more habitual trampling on the poor, than if he had said, “ye tread upon the poor.” They were ever trampling on those who were already of low and depressed condition. “And ye take from him burdens of wheat, presents of wheat.” The word always signifies presents, voluntary, ^{f198} or involuntary (of a contribution appointed by divine law, <A116>2 Chronicles 24:6-9; <A110>Ezekiel 20:40), what was carried, offered to anyone. They received “wheat” from the poor, cleansed, winnowed, and “sold the refuse (<A186>Amos 8:6), requiring what it was wrong to receive, and selling what at the least it was disgraceful not to give. God had expressly forbidden to “lend food for interest” (<A257>Leviticus 25:37; <A219>Deuteronomy 23:19). It may be that, in order to evade the law, the interest was called “a present.”

Ye have built house of hewn stone The houses of Israel were, perhaps most commonly, built of brick dried in the sun only. As least, houses built of hewn stone, like most of our’s, are proverbially contrasted with them, as the more solid with the more ordinary building. “The white bricks are fallen down, and we will build with hewn, stones” (<A190>Isaiah 9:10). And Ezekiel is bidden to dig through the wall of his house (<A115>Ezekiel 12:5,7). Houses of stone there were, as appears from the directions as to the unhealthy accretions, called the leprosy of the house (<A143>Leviticus 14:34-48). It may

be, however, that their houses of “hewn stone,” had a smoothed surface, like our “ashlar.” Anyhow, the sin of luxury is not simply measured by the things themselves, but by their relation to ourselves and our condition also; and wrong is not estimated by the extent of the gain and loss of the two parties only, but by the injury inflicted. These men, who built houses, luxurious for them, had wrung from the poor their living, as those do, who beat down the wages of the poor. Therefore they were not to take possession of what was their own; as Ahab, who by murder possessed himself of Naboth’s vineyard, forfeited his throne and his life. God, in the law, consulted for the feeling which desires to enter into the fruit of a man’s toil. When they should go to war they were to proclaim, “what man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard and hath not eaten of it? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle and another man eat of it” (^{<1815>}Deuteronomy 20:5,6). Now God reversed all this, and withdrew the tender love, whereby He had provided it. The words, from their proverbial character, express a principle of God’s judgments, that wrong dealing, whereby a man would secure himself or enlarge his inheritance, destroys both. Who poorer than our Lord, bared of all upon the Cross, of whom it had been written,

“They persecuted the poor helpless man, that they might slay him
who was vexed at the heart” (^{<1905>}Psalm 109:15),

and of whom the Jews said, “Come let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours?” (^{<1213>}Matthew 21:38). They killed Him, they said, “lest the Romans take away our place and nation” (^{<1148>}John 11:48). “The vineyard was taken from them;” their “place” destroyed, their “nation” dispersed.

^{<1012>}**Amos 5:12.** *For I know* Literally, “I have known.” They thought that God did not know, because He did not avenge; as the Psalmist says, “Thy judgments are far above out of his sight” (^{<1015>}Psalm 10:5). People who do not act with the thought of God, cease to know Him, and forget that He knows them. “Your manifold transgressions;” literally, “many are your transgressions and mighty your sins.” Their deeds, they knew, were mighty, strong, vigorous, decided. God says, that their “sins” were so, not many and great only, but “mighty, strong” (Rup.), “issuing not out of ignorance and infirmity, but out of proud strength” (Hug.),

“‘strong’ in the oppression of the poor and in provoking God,” and bringing down His wrath. So Asaph says of the prosperous; “Pride encompasseth them, as a chain; they are corrupt, they speak oppression wickedly; they speak from on high” (^{<9716>}Psalm 73:6,8).

They afflict the just Literally, “afflictors of the just,” that is, such as habitually afflicted him; whose habit and quality it was to afflict him. Our version mostly renders the word “enemies.” Originally, it signifies “afflicting, persecuting” enemies. Yet it is used also of the enemies of God, perhaps such as persecute Him in His people, or in His Son when in the flesh. The unjust hate the just, as is said in the book of Wisdom; “The ungodly said, Therefore let us lie in wait for the righteous, because he is not for our turn, and is clean contrary to our doings: he upbraideth us with our offending the law. He profeseth to have the knowledge of God, and he calleth himself the child of the Lord. He was made to reprove our thoughts. He is grievous unto us even to behold, for his life is not as other people’s, his ways are of another fashion” (Wisdom 2:1,12-15). So when the Truth and Righteousness came into the world, the Scribes and Pharisees hated Him because He reproved them, “denied” (^{<4814>}Acts 3:14) and crucified “the Holy one and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto” them, haters and “enemies of the Just,” and preferring to Him the unjust.

That take a bribe Literally, “a ransom.” It may be that, contrary to the law, which forbade, in these same words (^{<0852>}Numbers 35:22), “to take any ransom for the life of a murderer,” they took some ransom to set free rich murderers, and so, (as we have seen for many years to be the effect of unjust acquittals,) blood was shed with impunity, and was shed the more, because it was disregarded. The word, however, is used in one place apparently of any bribe, through which a man connives at injustice (^{<0913>}1 Samuel 12:3).

^{<1053>}**Amos 5:13.** *Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time* The “time” may be either the time of the obduracy of the wicked, or that of the common punishment. For a time may be called “evil,” whether evil is done, or is suffered in it, as Jacob says, “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been” (^{<0479>}Genesis 47:9). Of the first, he would perhaps say, that the oppressed poor would, if wise, be silent, not complaining or accusing, for, injustice having the mastery, complaint would only bring on them fresh sufferings. And again also he may mean that, on account of the incorrigibleness of the people, the wise and the prophets would be silent,

because the more the people were rebuked, the more impatient and worse they became. So our Lord was silent before His judges, as had been foretold of Him, for since they would not hear, His speaking would only increase their condemnation.

“If I tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also ask you, ye will not answer Me, nor let Me go” (^{<2267>}Luke 22:67,68).

So God said by Solomon:

“He that reproveth a scorner getteth himself shame, and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot” (^{<3107>}Proverbs 9:7).

And our Lord bids,

“Give not that which is holy unto dogs, and cast not your pearls before swine” (^{<4076>}Matthew 7:6).

They hated and rejected those who rebuked them. (^{<4170>}Matthew 7:10). Since then rebuke profited not, the prophets should hold their peace. It is a fearful judgment, when God withholds His warnings. In times of punishment also the prudent keep silence. Intense affliction is “dumb and openeth not its month,” owning the hand of God. It may be too, that Amos, like Hosea (^{<3004>}Hosea 4:4,17), expresses the uselessness of all reproof, in regard to the most of those whom he called to repentance, even while he continued earnestly to rebuke them.

^{<3054>}**Amos 5:14.** *Seek good and not evil* that is, and “seek not evil.” Amos again takes up his warning, “seek not Bethel; seek the Lord.” Now they not only “did evil,” but they “sought” it diligently; they were diligent in doing it, and so, in bringing it on themselves; they sought it out and the occasions of it. People (Jerome)

“cannot seek good without first putting away evil, as it is written, ‘cease to do evil, learn to do well’ (^{<2016>}Isaiah 1:16,17).” “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” He bids them use the same diligence in seeking good which they now used for evil. Seek it also wholly, not seeking at one while good, at another, evil, but wholly good, and Him who is Good. “He seeketh good, who believeth in Him who saith, ‘I am the Good Shepherd’ (^{<8101>}John 10:11).”

That ye may live In Him who “is the Life; and so the Lord, the God of hosts shall be with you,” by His holy presence, grace and protection, “as ye

have spoken.” Israel looked away from the sins whereby he displeased God, and looked to his half-worship of God as entitling him to all which God had promised to full obedience. (Dionysius):

“They gloried in the nobleness of their birth after the flesh, not in imitating the faith and lives of the patriarchs. So then, because they were descended from Abraham, they thought that God must defend them. Such were those Jews, to whom the Saviour said, “If ye were Abraham’s seed, ye would do the works of Abraham” (^{<488B>}John 8:39); and His forerunner, ‘think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham for our father’ (^{<488B>}Matthew 3:9).”

They wished that God should abide with them, that they might “abide in the land” (^{<488B>}Psalm 37:3), but they cared not to abide with God.

^{<3085>}**Amos 5:15.** *Hate the evil and love the good* Man will not cease wholly to “seek evil,” unless he “hate” it; nor will he “seek good,” unless he “love” it. Jerome: “He ‘hateth evil,’ who not only is not overcome by pleasure, but hates its deeds; and he ‘loveth good,’ who, not unwillingly or of necessity or from fear, doth what is good, but because it is good.” Dionysius: “Evil of sin must be hated, in and for itself; the sinner must not be hated in himself, but only the evil in him.” They hated him, who reproved them; he bids them hate sin. They “set down righteousness on the ground;” he bids them, “establish,” literally, “set up firmly, judgment in the gate.” To undo, as far as anyone can, the effects of past sin, is among the first-fruits of repentance.

It may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious (Dionysius): “He speaks so, in regard of the changeableness and uncertainty, not in God, but in man. There is no question but that God is gracious to all who “hate evil and love good;” but He doth not always deliver them from temporal calamity or captivity, because it is not for their salvation. Yet had Israel “hated evil and loved good,” perchance He would have delivered them from captivity, although He frequently said, they should be carried captive. For so He said to the two tribes in Jeremiah, “Amend your ways, and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place” (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 7:3). But since God knew that most of them would not repent, He saith not, “will be gracious unto Israel,” but, “unto the remnant of Joseph, that is, “the remnant, according to the election of grace” (^{<6104>}Romans 11:4,5); such as had been “the seven thousand who bowed not the knee unto Baal;” those who repented, while “the rest were hardened.” He says, “Joseph,” not

Ephraim, in order to recall to them the deeds of their father. Jacob's blessing on Joseph descended upon Ephraim, but was forfeited by Jeroboam's "sin wherewith he made Israel to sin." Rup.:

"Joseph in his deeds and sufferings was a type of Jesus Christ, in whom the remnant is saved."

"A remnant," however, only, "should be saved;" so the prophet says;

³¹⁵⁶**Amos 5:16.** *Therefore the Lord, the God of Hosts, the Lord* For the third time in these three last verses Amos again reminds them, by whose authority he speaks, His who had revealed Himself as "I AM," the self-existent God, God by nature and of nature, the Creator and Ruler and Lord of all, visible or invisible, against their false gods, or fictitious substitutes for the true God. Here, over and above those titles, "HE IS," that is, HE alone IS, the "God of Hosts, God of all things, in heaven and earth," the heavenly bodies from whose influences the idolaters hoped for good, and the unseen evil beings (²³²⁰Isaiah 24:21), who seduced them, he adds the title, which people most shrink from, "Lord." He who so threatened, was the Same who had absolute power over His creatures, to dispose of them, as He willed. It costs people nothing to own God, as a Creator, the Cause of causes, the Orderer of all things by certain fixed laws. It satisfies certain intellects, so to own Him. What man, a sinner, shrinks from, is that the God is LORD, the absolute disposer and Master of his sinful self.

Wailing in all streets Literally, "broad places," that is, market-places. "There," where judgments were held, where were the markets, where consequently had been all the manifold oppressions through injustice in judgments and in dealings, and the wailings of the oppressed; "wailing" should come on them.

They shall say in all-the highways that is, "streets, alas! alas!" our, "woe, woe." It is the word so often used by our Lord; "woe unto you." This is no imagery. Truth has a more awful, sterner, reality than any imagery. The terribleness of the prophecy lies in its truth. When war pressed without on the walls of Samaria, and within was famine and pestilence, woe, woe, woe, must have echoed in every street, for in every street was death and fear of worse. Yet imagine every sound of joy or din or hum of people, or mirth of children, hushed in the streets, and woe, woe, going up from every street of a metropolis, in one unmitigated, unchanging, ever-repeated

monotony of grief. Such were the present fruits of sin. Yet what a mere shadow of the inward grief is its outward utterance!

And they shall call the farmer to mourning To cultivate the fields would then only be to provide food for the enemy. His occupation would be gone. One universal sorrow would give one universal employment. To this, they would call those unskilled, with their deep strong voices; they would, by a public act, “proclaim wailing to^{f199} those skillful in lamentation.” It was, as it were, a dirge over the funeral of their country. As, at funerals, they employed minstrels, both men and women (⁴⁸⁵⁵2 Chronicles 35:25. The word “skillful” is masculine so in ⁴⁰²³Matthew 9:23), who, by mournful anthems and the touching plaintiveness of the human voice, should stir up deeper depths of sorrow, so here, over the whole of Israel. And as at the funeral of one respected or beloved, they used exclamations of woe, “ah my brother!” and “ah sister, ah lord, ah his glory,” so Jeremiah bids them, “call and make haste and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears: for a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion. How are we spoiled!” (²⁴⁹⁷Jeremiah 9:17-19). (from Sanct.):

“In joy, men long to impart their joys to others, and exhort them to joy with them. Our Lord sanctions this, in speaking of the Good Shepherd, who called His friends and neighbors together, “rejoice with Me, for I have found the sheep which I had lost.” Nor is it anything new, that, when we have received any great benefit from God, we call even the inanimate creation to thank and praise God. So did David oftentimes and the three children. So too in sorrow. When anything adverse has befallen us, we invite even senseless things to grieve with us, as though our own tears sufficed not for so great a sorrow.”

The same feeling makes the rich now clothe those of their household in mourning, which made those of old hire mourners, that all might be in harmony with their grief.

¹⁰⁵⁷**Amos 5:17.** *And in all vineyards shall be wailing* All joy should be turned into sorrow. Where aforetime was the vintage-shout in thankfulness for the ingathering, and anticipating gladness to come, there, in the source of their luxury, should be wailing, the forerunner of sorrow to come. it was a vintage, not of wine, but of woe.

For I will pass through thee In the destruction of the firstborn in Egypt, God did not “pass through” but “passed over” them, and they kept, in memory thereof the feast of the Passover. Now God would no longer “pass over” them and their sins. He says, “I will pass through thee,” as He then said, “I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn of the land of Egypt — and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment” (^{<01212>}Exodus 12:12). As God says by Hosea, “I will not enter the city” (^{<28109>}Hosea 11:9), that is, He would not make His presence felt, or take cognizance, when to take cognizance would be to punish, so here, contrariwise, He says, “I will pass through,” taking exact and severe account, in judgment. Jerome further says, “so often as this word is used in Holy Scripture, in the person of God, it denotes punishment, that He would not abide among them, but would pass through and leave them. Surely, it is an image of this, that, when the Jews would have cast our Lord headlong from the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, “He passed through the midst of them (^{<04030>}Luke 4:30), so that they could not see Him nor know Him, “and so went His way.” And this, when He had just told them, that none of the widows of Israel were fed by Elias, or the lepers cleansed by Elisha, save the widow of Sarepta, and Naaman the Syrian. So should their leprosy cleave to them, and the famine of the word of God and of the oil of the Holy Spirit abide among them, while the Gentiles were washed by His laver and fed with the bread of life.”

^{<0158>}**Amos 5:18.** *Woe unto you that desire* for yourselves. This is the force of *hwa*,^{<h183>}.

the Day of the Lord There were “mockers in those days” (^{<6008>}2 Peter 3:3,4; ^{<6018>}Jude 1:18), as there are now, and as there shall be in the last. And as the “scoffers in the last days” (^{<6008>}2 Peter 3:3,4; ^{<6018>}Jude 1:18) shall say, “Where is the promise of His coming?” so these said,

“let Him make speed and hasten His work, that we may see it, and let the council of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it” (^{<2159>}Isaiah 5:19).

Jeremiah complained;

“they say unto me, where is the word of the Lord? let it come now!” (^{<2175>}Jeremiah 17:15).

And God says to Ezekiel,

“Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, the days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? The vision that he seeth is for many days, and he prophesieth of the times far off” (~~3177~~Ezekiel 12:22,27).

“They would shew their courage and strength of mind, by longing for the Day of the Lord, which the prophets foretold, in which God was to shew forth His power on the disobedient.” Lap.:

“Let it come, what these prophets threaten until they are hoarse, let it come, let it come. It is ever held out to us, and never comes. We do not believe that it will come at all, or if it do come, it will not be so dreadful after all; it will go as it came.”

It may be, however, that they who scoffed at Amos, cloked their unbelief under the form of desiring the good days, which God had promised by Joel afterward. Jerome: “There is not,” they would say, “so much of evil in the captivity, as there is of good in what the Lord has promised afterward.” Amos meets the hypocrisy or the scoff, by the appeal to their consciences, “to what end is it to you?” They had nothing in common with it or with God. Whatever it had of good, was not for such as them. “The Day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.” Like the pillar of the cloud between Israel and the Egyptians, which betokened God’s presence, every day in which He shows forth His presence, is a day of light and darkness to those of different characters. The prophets foretold both, but not to all. These scoffers either denied the Coming of that day altogether, or denied its terrors. Either way, they disbelieved God, and, disbelieving Him, would have no share in His promises. To them, the Day of the Lord would be unmixed darkness, distress, desolation, destruction, without one ray of gladness. The tempers of people, their belief or disbelief, are the same, as to the Great Day of the Lord, the Day of Judgment. It is all one, whether people deny it altogether or deny its terrors. In either case, they deny it, such as God has ordained it. The words of Amos condemn them too. “The Day of the Lord” had already become the name for every day of judgment, leading on to the Last Day. The principle of all God’s judgments is one and the same. One and the same are the characters of those who are to be judged. In one and the same way, is each judgment looked forward to, neglected, prepared for, believed, disbelieved. In one and the same way, our Lord has taught us, will the Great Day come, as the judgments of the flood or upon Sodom, and will find people prepared or unprepared, as they

were then. Words then, which describe the character of any day of Judgment, do, according to the Mind of God the Holy Spirit, describe all, and the last also. Of this too, and that chiefly, because it is the greatest, are the words spoken, “Woe unto you, who desire,” amiss or rashly or scornfully or in misbelief, “the Day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? The Day of the Lord is darkness and not light.”

Rup.:

“This sounds a strange woe. It had not seemed strange, had he said, ‘Woe to you, who fear not the Day of the Lord.’ For, ‘not to fear,’ belongs to bad, ungodly people. But the good may desire it, so that the Apostle says, ‘I desire to depart and to be with Christ’ (^{<3023>}Philippians 1:23). Yet even their desire is not without a sort of fear. For ‘who can say, I have made my heart clean?’ (^{<3110>}Proverbs 20:9). Yet that is the fear, not of slaves, but of sons; ‘nor hath it torment,’ (^{<3148>}1 John 4:18), for it hath ‘strong consolation through hope’ (^{<3168>}Hebrews 6:18; ^{<3172>}Romans 5:2). When then he says, ‘Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord,’ he rebuketh their boldness, ‘who trust in themselves, that they are righteous’ (^{<3189>}Luke 18:9).” “At one and the same time,” says Jerome, “the confidence of the proud is shaken off, who, in order to appear righteous before people, are accustomed to long for the Day of Judgment and to say, ‘Would that the Lord would come, would that we might be dissolved and be with Christ,’ imitating the Pharisee, who spake in the Gospel, “God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are” (^{<3181>}Luke 18:11,12). For the very fact, that they “desire,” and do not fear, “the Day of the Lord,” shows, that they are worthy of punishment, since no man is without sin (^{<3166>}2 Chronicles 6:36), and the “stars are not pure in His sight” (^{<3125>}Job 25:5). And He “concluded all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all” (^{<3182>}Galatians 3:22; ^{<3113>}Romans 11:32). Since, then, no one can judge concerning the Judgment of God, and we are to “give account of every idle word” (^{<3126>}Matthew 12:36), and Job “offered sacrifices” (^{<3105>}Job 1:5) daily for his sons, lest they should have thought something perversely against the Lord, what rashness it is, to long to reign alone! (^{<3148>}1 Corinthians 4:8). In troubles and distresses we are accustomed to say, ‘would that we might depart out of the body and be freed from the miseries of this world,’ not knowing that, while we are in this flesh, we have place for

repentance; but if we depart, we shall hear that of the prophet, “in hell who will give Thee thanks?” (^{<406>}Psalm 6:5). That is “the sorrow of this world” (^{<4070>}2 Corinthians 7:10), which worketh “death,” wherewith the Apostle would not have him sorrow who had sinned with his father’s wife; the sorrow whereby the wretched Judas too perished, who, “swallowed up with overmuch sorrow” (^{<4017>}2 Corinthians 2:7), joined murder (^{<4173>}Matthew 27:3-5) to his betrayal, a murder the worst of murders, so that where he thought to find a remedy, and that death by hanging was the end of ills, there he found the lion and the bear, and the serpent, under which names I think that different punishments are intended, or else the devil himself, who is rightly called a lion or bear or serpent.”

^{<318>}**Amos 5:19.** *As if a man, did flee from a lion* The Day of the Lord is a day of terror on every side. Before and behind, without and within, abroad under the roof of heaven, or under the shelter of his own, everywhere is terror and death. The Syrian bear is said to have been more fierce and savage than the lion. For its fierceness and voracity (^{<2005>}Daniel 7:5), God made it, in Daniel’s vision, a symbol of the empire of the Medes. From both lion and bear there might be escape by flight. When the man had “leaned his hand” trustfully “on the wall” of his own house, “and the serpent bit him,” there was no escape. He had fled from death to death, from peril to destruction.

^{<318>}**Amos 5:20.** *Shall not the Day of the Lord be darkness?* He had described that Day as a day of inevitable destruction, such its man’s own conscience and guilty fears anticipate, and then appeals to their own consciences, “is it not so, as I have said?” People’s consciences are truer than their intellect. However, they may employ the subtlety of their intellect to dull their conscience, they feel, in their heart of hearts, that there is a Judge, that guilt is punished, that they are guilty. The soul is a witness to its own deathlessness, its own accountableness, its own punishableness (See Tertullian’s short but remarkable treatise “of the witness of the soul,” p. 132-42. Oxford Translation). Intellect carries the question out of itself into the region of surmising and disputings. Conscience is compelled to receive it back into its own court, and to give the sentence, which it would fain withhold. Like the god of the pagan fable, who changed himself into all sorts of forms, but when he was still held fast, gave at the last, the true answer, conscience shrinks back, twists, writhes, evades, turns away, but,

in the end, it will answer truly, when it must. The prophet then, turns quick round upon the conscience, and says, “tell me, for you know.”

Amos 5:21. *I hate, I despise your feasts* Israel clave to its heart’s sin, the worship of the true God, under the idol-form of the calf; else, it would fain be conscientious and scrupulous. It had its “feasts” of solemn “joy” and the “restraint” of its “solemn assemblies” (literally, “restraint”), which all were constrained to keep, abstaining from all servile work. They offered “whole burnt offerings,” the token of self-sacrifice, in which the sacrificer retained nothing to himself, but gave the whole freely to God. They offered also “peace offerings,” as tokens of the willing thankfulness of souls at peace with God. What they offered, was the best of its kind, “fatted beasts.” Hymns of praise, full-toned chorus, instrumental music! What was missing, Israel thought, to secure them the favor of God? Love and obedience. “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” And so those things, whereby they hoped to propitiate God, were the object of His displeasure. “I hate, I despise, I will not accept” with good pleasure; “I will not regard,” look toward, “I will not hear, will not smell.” The words, “I will not smell,” reminded them of that threat in the law” (**Leviticus 26:31**), “I will make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors.” In so many ways does God declare that He would not accept or endure, what they all the while were building upon, as grounds of their acceptance. And yet so secure were they, that the only sacrifice which they did not offer, was the sin or trespass offering. Worshiping “nature,” not a holy, Personal, God, they had no sense of unholiness, for which to plead the Atoning Sacrifice to come. Truly each Day of Judgment unveils much self-deceit. How much more the Last!

Amos 5:23. *Take thou away from Me* Literally, “from upon Me,” that is, from being a burden to Me, a weight on Me. So God says by Isaiah, “your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth; they are a burden upon Me; I am weary to bear them” (**Isaiah 1:14**). Their “songs” and hymns were but a confused, tumultuous, “noise,” since they had not the harmony of love.

For (And) the melody of thy viols I will not hear Yet the “nebel,” probably a sort of harp, was almost exclusively consecrated to the service of God, and the Psalms were God’s own writing. Doubtless they sounded

harmoniously in their own ears; but it reached no further. Their melody, like much Church-music, was for itself, and ended in itself. (Lap.):

“Let Christian chanters learn hence, not to set the whole devotion of Psalmody in a good voice, subtlety of modulation and rapid intonation, etc., quavering like birds, to tickle the ears of the curious, take them off to themselves and away from prayer, lest they hear from God, ‘I will not hear the melody of thy viols.’ Let them learn that of the Apostle, ‘I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also’ (^{<4645>}1 Corinthians 14:15).”

Augustine, in Psalm 30; Enarr. iv. (p. 203. Oxford Translation) L.:

“If the Psalm prays, pray; if it sorrows, sorrow; if it is glad, rejoice; if full of hope, hope; if of fear, fear. For whatever is therein written, is our mirror.”

Augustine in Psalm 119 (n. 9. T. v. p. 470. Old Testament) L.:

“How many are loud in voice, dumb in heart! How many lips are silent, but their love is loud! For the ears of God are to the heart of man. As the ears of the body are to the mouth of man, so the heart of man is to the ears of God. Many are heard with closed lips, and many who cry aloud are not heard.”

Dionysius:

“God says, ‘I will not hear,’ as He says, ‘praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner’ (Ecclesiasticus 15:9), and, ‘to the ungodly saith God, what hast thou to do, to declare My statutes?’ (^{<4816>}Psalm 50:16), and, ‘he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination’ (^{<3189>}Proverbs 28:9). It is not meant hereby that the wicked ought wholly to abstain from the praise of God and from prayers, but that they should be diligent to amend, and know that through such imperfect services they cannot be saved.”

The prophet urges upon them the terribleness of the Day of Judgment, that they might feel and flee its terribleness, before it comes. He impresses on them the fruitlessness of their prayers, that, amending, they might so pray, that God would hear them.

Amos 5:24. *But* (And) *let judgment run down* (Literally, “roll” English margin) “like water.” The duties of either table include both; since there is no true love for man without the love of God, nor any real love or duty to God without the love of man. People will exchange their sins for other sins. They will not break them off unless they be converted to God. But the first outward step in conversion, is to break off sin. He bids them then “let judgment,” which had hitherto ever been perverted in its course, “roll on like” a mighty tide of “waters,” sweeping before it all hindrances, obstructed by no power, turned aside by no bribery, but pouring on in one perpetual flow, reaching all, refreshing all, and “righteousness like a mighty (or ceaseless) stream.” The word “ethan” may signify “strong or perennial.” Whence the seventh month, just before the early rain, was called “the month Ethanym (^{<1002>}1 Kings 8:2), that is, the month of the “perennial streams,” when they alone flowed. In the meaning “perennial,” it would stand tacitly contrasted with “streams which fail or lie.” True righteousness is not fitful, like an intermitting stream, vehement at one time, then disappearing, but continuous, unailing.

Amos 5:25. *Have ye offered* (better, “Did ye offer”) *unto Me sacrifices and offerings?* Israel justified himself to himself by his half-service. This had been his way from the first. “Their heart was not whole with God, neither abode they in His covenant” (^{<1087>}Psalm 78:37). He thought to be accepted by God, because he did a certain homage to Him. He acknowledged God in his own way. God sets before him another instance of this half-service and what it issued in; the service of that generation which He brought out of Egypt, and which left their bones in the wilderness. The idolatry of the ten tribes was the revival of the idolatry of the wilderness. The ten tribes owned as the forefathers of their worship those first idolaters (See the introduction to Hosea). They identified themselves with sin which they did not commit. By approving it and copying it, they made that sin their own. As the Church of God in all times is one and the same, and Hosea says of God’s vision to Jacob, “there He spake with us” (^{<8104>}Hosea 12:4. See ab. p. 76), so that great opposite camp, the city of the devil, has a continuous existence through all time. These idolaters were “filling up the measure of” their forefathers, and in the end of those forefathers, who perished in the wilderness where they sinned, they might behold their own. As God rejected the divided service of their forefathers, so He would their’s.

God does not say that they did not offer sacrifice at all, but that they did not offer unto “Him.” The “unto Me” is emphatic. If God is not served wholly and alone, He is not served at all. (Jerome): “He regardeth not the offering, but the will of the offerer.” Some sacrifices were offered during the 38 years and a half, after God had rejected that generation, and left them to die in the wilderness. For the rebellion of Korah and his company was a claim to exercise the priesthood, as Aaron was exercising it (^{<0165>}Numbers 16:5,9,10). When atonement was to be made, the “live coals” were already on the altar (^{<0165>}Numbers 16:46). These, however, were not the free-will offerings of the people, but the ordinance of God, performed by the priests. The people, in that they went after their idols, had no share in nor benefit from what was offered in their name. So Moses says, “they sacrificed to devils, not to God” (^{<0177>}Deuteronomy 32:17); and Ezekiel, “Their heart went after their idols” (^{<0116>}Ezekiel 20:16). Those were the gods of their affections, whom they chose. God had taken them for His people, and had become their God, on the condition that they should not associate other gods with Him (^{<0210>}Exodus 20:2-5). Had they loved God who made them, they would have loved none beside Him. Since they chose other gods, these were the objects of their love. God was, at most, an object of their fear. As He said by Hosea, “their bread is for themselves, it shall not enter into the house of the Lord” (^{<0304>}Hosea 9:4), so here He asks, and by asking denies it, “Did ye offer unto Me?” Idolatry and heresy feign a god of their own. They do not own God as He has revealed Himself; and since they own not God as He is, the god whom they worship, is not the true God, but some creature of their own imaginings, such as they conceive God to be. Anti-Trinitarianism denies to God His essential Being, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Other heresies refuse to own His awful holiness and justice; others, the depth of His love and condescension. Plainly, their god is not the one true God. So these idolaters, while they associated with God gods of cruelty and lust, and looked to them for things which God in His holiness and love refused them, did not own God, as the One Holy Creator, the Sole Disposer of all things.

^{<0185>}**Amos 5:26.** *But ye have borne* Literally, “And ye bare the tabernacle of your Moloch” (literally, “your king,” from where the idol Moloch had its name.) He assigns the reason, why he had denied that they sacrificed to God in the wilderness. “Did ye offer sacrifices unto Me, and ye bare?” that is, seeing that ye bare. The two were incompatible. Since they did “carry

about the tabernacle of their king,” they did not really worship God. He whom they chose as “their king,” was their god. The “tabernacle” or “tent” was probably a little portable shrine, such as Demetrius the silversmith and those of his craft made for the little statues of their goddess Diana (~~4421~~ Acts 19:24). Such are mentioned in Egyptian idolatry. “They carry forth” we are told (Herodotus, ii. 63), “the image in a small shrine of gilt wood.”

Of your Moloch and Chiun The two clauses must be read separately, the “tabernacles of Moloch” (strictly, “of your king,”) “and Chiun your images.” The two clauses, “the tabernacle of your king, and Chiun your images,” are altogether distinct. They correspond to one another, but they must not be read as one whole, in the sense, “the tabernacle of your king and of Chiun your images.” The rendering of the last clause is uncertain. God has so “utterly abolished the idols” (~~2128~~ Isaiah 2:18), through whom Satan contested with Him the allegiance of His people, that we have no certain knowledge, what they were. There may be some connection between the god whom the Israelites in the wilderness worshiped as “their king,” and him whose worship Solomon, in his decay, brought into Jerusalem, the god whom the Ammonites worshiped as “the king, Hammolech,” or, as he is once called, “Molech (The idol, called “Molech,” ~~11107~~ 1 Kings 11:7, had been called “Milchom,” ~~11106~~ 1 Kings 11:5), and three times “Milchom” (~~11105~~ 1 Kings 11:5,33; ~~2233~~ 2 Kings 23:13) (perhaps an abstract, as some used to speak of “the Deity”). He is mostly called “Hammolech,” the Ammonite way of pronouncing what the Hebrews called “Hammelech, the king.” But since the name designates the god only as “the king,” it may have been given to different gods, whom the pagan worshiped as their chief god. In Jewish idolatry, it became equivalent to Baal (~~2495~~ Jeremiah 19:5; 32:35), “lord;” and to avert his displeasure, the Hebrews (as did the Carthaginians, a Phoenician people, down to the time of our Lord,^{f200} burned their own children, “their sons and their daughters,” alive to him. Yet, even in these dreadful rites, the Carthaginian worship^{f201} was more cold-blooded and artificial than that of Phoenicia. But whether “the king,” whom the Israelites worshiped in the wilderness, was the same as the Ammonite Molech or no, those dreadful sacrifices were then no part of his worship; else Amos would not have spoken of the idolatry, “as the carrying about his tabernacle” only. He would have described it by its greatest offensiveness. “The king” was a title also of the Egyptian Deity, Osiris (Plutarch. Isaiah et Os. c. 10), who was identified with the sun, and whose worship Israel may probably have brought with them, as well as that

of the calf, his symbol. Again most of the old translators have retained the Hebrew word Chiyyan,^{f202} either regarding it as a proper name, or unable to translate it. Some later tradition identifies it with the planet Saturn,^{f203} which under a different name, the Arabs propitiated as a malevolent being (Poc spec. Hist. Arabic p. 103,120. ed. White). In Ephrem's time, the pagan Syrians worshiped "the child-devouring Chivan" (Serm. 8 adv. Haer. Opp. Syr. ii. 458). Israel however, did not learn the idolatry from the neighboring Arabs, since it is not the Arab name of that planet (The Kamoos explains the Persian "Kaivan" by the Arabic name "Zochal"). In Egyptian, the name of Chunsu, one of the 12 gods who severally were thought to preside over the 12 months, appears in an abridged form Chuns or Chon ("The Coptic name Pasehons or Pachon is resolved into Pachons," "that of; Chons or Chonsou; the name of the god who, according to the monuments, presided over this month." Brugsch, Egypt, p. 162). He was, in their mythology, held to be "the oldest son of Ammon";^{f204} "his name is said to signify (Birch, Ibid.), "power, might;" and he to be that ideal of might, worshiped as the Egyptian Hercules ("They say that Hercules is in AEgyptian called Chon, Χων)."

Etymology M. See Sir G. Wilk. in Rawlinson, Herodotus, ii. 78. note. "The Egyptians called Hercules Chon." L. Girald (Opp. ii. 327) from Xenophon. Antioch. Drus. but the authority given is wrong). The name Chun extended into Phoenician (Sanchoniathon, Chunasun. Movers, Phoen. i. 291) and Assyrian proper names. Still Chon is not Chiyyun; and the fact that the name was retained as Chon or Chun in Phoenicia (where the worship was borrowed) as well as in Assyria, is a ground for hesitating to identify with it the word of Chiyyun, which has a certain likeness only to the abridged name. Jerome's Hebrew teacher on the other hand knew of no such tradition, and Jerome renders it "image (Theodotion also translates it as a noun).

And certainly it is most natural to render it not as a name, but as a common noun. It may probably mean, "the pedestal," the "basis of your images." The prophet had spoken of their images, as covered over with their little "shrines, the shrines of your king." Here he may, not improbably, speak of them, its fastened to a pedestal. Such were the gods, whom they chose for the One true God, gods, "carried about," covered over, fixed to their place, lest they should fall.

The worship was certainly some form of star-worship, since there follows, “the star of your god.” It took place after the worship of the calf. For Stephen, after having spoken of that idolatry says,

“Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets” (~~417D~~ Acts 7:42)

Upon their rebellions, God at last gave them up to themselves. Stephen calls the god whom they worshiped, “Rephan,” quoting the then existing Greek translation, “having regard,” Jerome says, “to the meaning rather than the words. This is to be observed in all Holy Scripture, that Apostles and apostolic men, in citing testimonies from the Old Testament, regard, not the words, but the meaning, nor do they follow the words, step by step, provided they do not depart from the meaning.”

Of the special idolatry there is no mention in Moses, in like way as the mention of the worship of the “goat,^{f205} a second symbol of the Pantheistic worship of Egypt,^{f206} is contained only incidentally in the prohibition of that worship. After the final rebellion, upon which God rejected that generation, Holy Scripture takes no account of them. They had failed God; they had forfeited the distinction, for which God had created, preserved, taught them, revealed Himself to them, and had, by great miracles, rescued them from Egypt. Thenceforth, that generation was cast aside unnoticed.

Which ye made to yourselves This was the fundamental fault, that they “made it for themselves.” Instead of the tabernacle, which God, their king, appointed, they “bare about the tabernacle” of HIM whom they took for their king; and for the service which He gave, they “chose new gods” (~~408B~~ Judges 5:8) for themselves. Whereas God made them for Himself, they made for themselves gods out of their own mind. All idolatry is self will, first choosing a god, and then enslaved to it.

~~418E~~ **Amos 5:27.** *Therefore* (And) this being so, such having been their way from the beginning until now,

will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus Syria was the most powerful enemy by whom God had heretofore chastened them (~~423E~~ 2 Kings 13:7). From Syria He had recently, for the time, delivered them, and had given Damascus into their hands (~~424S~~ 2 Kings 14:25,28). That day of grace had been wasted, and they were still rebellious. Now God would bring against them a mightier enemy. Damascus, the scene of their triumph,

should be their pathway to captivity. God would “cause” them “to go into captivity,” not to “Damascus,” from where they might have easily returned, but “beyond” it, as He did, “into the cities of the Medes.” But Israel had, up to the time of Amos and beyond it, no enemy, no war, “beyond Damascus.” Jehu had probably paid tribute to Shalmanubar king of Assyria, to strengthen himself (See the introduction to Hosea). The Assyrian monarch had warred against Israel’s enemies, and seemingly received some check from them (see the note above at Amos 1:3). Against Israel he had shown no hostility. But for the conspiracy of one yet to be born in private life, one of the captains of Israel who by murder, became its sovereign, it might have continued on in its own land. The Assyrian monarchs needed tribute, not slaves; nor did they employ Israel as slaves. Exile was but a wholesale imprisonment of the nation in a large but safe prison-house. Had they been still, they were more profitable to Assyria, as tributaries in their own land. There was no temptation to remove them, when Amos prophesied. The temptation came with political intrigues which had not then commenced. The then Assyrian monarch, Shamasiva, defeated their enemies the Syrians, united with and aiding the Babylonians (Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 466, from Cuneiform Inscriptions); “they” had then had no share in the opposition to Assyria, but lay safe in their mountain-fastness. It has been said (DeWette, Einl. Section 232), “Although the kingdom of Israel had, through Jeroboam, recovered its old borders, yet careless insolence, luxury, unrighteousness, “must” bring the destruction of the kingdom which the prophet foretells. The prophet does but dimly forebode the superior power of Assyria.” Solomon had declared the truth,

“Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (~~2018~~ Proverbs 14:34).

But there are many sorts of decay. Decay does not involve the transportation of a people. Nay, decay would not bring it, but the contrary. A mere luxurious people rots on its own soil, and would be left to rot there. It was the little remnant of energy, political cabaling, warlike spirit, in Israel, which brought its ruin from man. Idolatry, “insolence, luxury, unrighteousness,” bring down the displeasure of God, not of man. Yet Amos foretold, that God would bring the destruction through man. They were, too, no worse than their neighbors, nor so bad; not so bad as the Assyrians themselves, except that, God having revealed Himself to them, they had more light. The sin then, the punishment the mode of punishment,

belong to the divine revelation. Such sins and worse have existed in Christian nations. They were in part sins directly against God. God reserves to Himself, how and when He will punish. He has annexed no such visible laws of punishment to a nation's sins that man could, of his own wisdom or observation of God's ways, foresee it. They through whom He willed to inflict it, and whom Amos pointed out, were not provoked by "those" sins. There was no connection between Israel's present sins, and Assyria's future vengeance. No Eastern despot cares for the oppressions of his subjects, so that his own tribute is collected. See the whole range of Muslim rule now. As far too as we know, neither Assyria nor any other power had hitherto punished rebellious nations by transporting them (See the note above at Amos 1:5, pp. 160,161); and certainly Israel had not yet rebelled, or meditated rebellion. He only who controls the rebellious wills of people, and through their self-will works out His own all-wise Will and man's punishment, could know the future of Israel and Assyria, and how through the pride of Assyria He would bring down the pride of Samaria.

It has been well said by a thoughtful observer of the world's history, "Whosoever attempts to prophesy, not being inspired, is a fool." We English know our own sins, many and grievous; we know of a vast reign of violence, murder, blasphemy, theft, uncleanness, covetousness, dishonest dealing, unrighteousness, and of the breach of every commandment of God: we know well (written in 1860) now of an instrument in God's Hands, not far off; like the Assyrian, but within two hours of our coast; armaments have been collected; a harbor is being formed; our own coast openly examined; iron-sheeted vessels prepared; night-signals provided; some of our own alienated population organized; with a view to our invasion. We recognize the likelihood of the invasion, fortify our coast, arm, not as a profession, but for security. Our preparations testify, how widespread is our expectation. No one scarcely doubts that it will be. Yet who dare predict the issue? Will God permit that scourge to come? Will he prevail? What would be the extent of our sufferings or loss? How would our commerce or our Empire be impaired? Would it be dismembered? Since no man can affirm anything as to this which is close at hand, since none of us would dare to affirm in God's Name, in regard to any one stage of all this future, that this or that would or would not happen, then let people have at least the modesty of the magicians of Egypt, and seeing in God's prophets those absolute predictions of a future, such as their own wisdom, under circumstances far more favorable, could not dare to make,

own; “This is the finger of God” (~~1189~~ Exodus 8:19). Not we alone. We see all Europe shaken; we see powers of all sorts, heaving to and fro; we see the Turkish power ready to dissolve, stayed up, like a dead man, only by un-Christian jealousies of Christians. Some things we may partially guess at. But with all our means of knowing what passes everywhere, with all our knowledge of the internal impulses of nations, hearing, as we do, almost every pulse which beats in the great European system, knowing the diseases which, here and there, threaten convulsion or dissolution, no one dare stake his human wisdom on any ABSOLUTE prediction, like these of the shepherd of Tekoa as to Damascus (see the note above at Amos 1:5. pp. 160,161) and Israel. To say the like in God’s Name, unless inspired, we should know to be blasphemy. God Himself set the alternative before men. “Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled; who among them that can declare this, and show former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say,” It is “truth” (~~2349~~ Isaiah 43:9).

Stephen, in quoting this prophecy, substitutes, Babylon for Damascus, as indeed “the cities of the Medes” were further than Babylon. Perhaps he set the name, in order to remind them, that as God had brought Abraham “out of the land of the Chaldeans” (~~4070~~ Acts 7:4), leaving the idols which his “fathers” had “served” (~~16344~~ Joshua 24:14), to serve God only, so they, serving idols, were carried back, from where Abraham had come, forfeiting, with the faith of Abraham, the promises made to Abraham; aliens and outcasts.

Saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts The Lord of the heavenly hosts for whose worship they forsook God; the Lord of the hosts on earth, whose ministry He employs to punish those who rebel against Him (Note: Rup.), “For He hath many hosts to execute His judgments, the hosts of the Assyrians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks and Romans.” All creatures in heaven and in earth are, as He says of the holy Angels, “ministers of His, that do His pleasure” (~~19432~~ Psalm 103:21).

NOTES ON AMOS 6

<300>Amos 6:1. *Woe to them that are at ease* The word always means such as are recklessly at their ease, “the careless ones,” such as those whom Isaiah bids (<230>Isaiah 32:9-11), “rise up, tremble, be troubled, for many days and years shall ye be troubled.” It is that luxury and ease, which sensualize the soul, and make it dull, stupid, hard-hearted. By one earnest, passing word, the prophet warns his own land, that present sinful ease ends in future woe. “Woe unto them that laugh now: for they shall mourn and weep” (<416>Luke 6:25). Rup.:

“He foretells the destruction and captivity of both Judah and Israel at once; and not only that captivity at Babylon, but that whereby they are dispersed unto this day.”

Luxury and deepest sins of the flesh were rife in that generation (see <380>John 8:9; <512>Romans 2:21-24; <213>Luke 11:39,42; <424>Matthew 23:14,23,26), which killed Him who for our sakes became poor.

And trust in the mountain of Samaria Not in God. Samaria was strong (see the note above at <300>Amos 3:9), resisted for three years, and was the last city of Israel which was taken. “The king of Assyria came up throughout all the land and went up to Samaria, and besieged it (<1275>2 Kings 17:5). Benhadad, in that former siege, when God delivered them (<1206>2 Kings 7:6), attempted no assault, but famine only.

Which are named the chief of the nations Literally, “the named of the chief of the nations,” that is, those who, in Israel, which by the distinguishing favor of God were “chief of the nations,” were themselves, marked, distinguished, “named.” The prophet, by one word, refers them back to those first princes of the congregation, of whom Moses used that same word (<4017>Numbers 1:17). They were “heads of the houses of their fathers (<4004>Numbers 1:4), renowned of the congregation, heads of thousands in Israel (<4016>Numbers 1:16). As, if anyone were to call the Peers, “Barons of England,” he would carry us back to the days of Magna Charta, although six centuries and a half ago, so this word, occurring at that time^{f207} and Ezra (<1830>Ezra 8:20) as taken from the Pentateuch. See Hengstenberg, Auth. d. Pent. i. 97), here only in any Scripture since Moses, carried back the thoughts of the degenerate aristocracy of Israel to the faith and zeal of

their forefathers, “what” they ought to have been, and “what” they were. As Amalek of old was “first of the nations” (^{<098D>}Numbers 24:20) in its enmity against the people of God (^{<0278>}Exodus 17:8-16. So Onkelos, Jerome, Pseudo-Jonathan), having, first of all, shown that implacable hatred, which Ammon, Moab, Edom, evinced afterward, so was Israel “first of nations,” as by God. It became, in an evil way, “first of nations,” that is, distinguished above the heat by rejecting Him.

To whom the house of Israel came, or have come They were, like those princes of old, raised above others. Israel “came” to them for judgment; and they, regardless of duty, lived only for self-indulgence, effeminacy, and pride. Jerome renders in the same sense, “that enter pompously the house of Israel,” literally, “enter for themselves,” as if they were lords of it, and it was made for them.

^{<301D>}**Amos 6:2.** *Pass over to Calneh* He bids them behold, east, north, and west, survey three neighboring kingdoms, and see whether God had not, even in the gifts of this world, dealt better with Israel. Why then so requite Him? “Calneh” (which Isaiah calls “Calno” (^{<301D>}Isaiah 10:9), Ezekiel, “Canneh” (^{<3273>}Ezekiel 27:23)), was one of the four cities, built by Nimrod “in the land of Shinar” (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:10), the beginning of his kingdom.” From that time, until this of Amos, no mention of it occurs. It, probably, was more than once conquered by the Assyrians (See the introduction to Amos), lying, as it did, on the Tigris, some 40 miles perhaps from Babylon. Hence, it was said, under its new name Ctesiphon (Jerome here. Ephr. Jonathan), to have been built, that is, rebuilt, by the Macedonians (Procop. B. Pers. ii. 28), and again by the Parthians, (Pliny, vi. 26. n. 30. It certainly existed before, Polyb. v. 46), whose (Strabo, xvi. 1. 26, who speaks of it as existing already) “kings made it their winter residence on account of its good air.” It was anew destroyed by Severus (Dio Cass. lxxv. Sev. 9), rebuilt by Sapor II in the 4th Century (Mirkhond, Hist. d. Sass. in De Sacy, Men. sur la Perse, p. 316). Julian’s generals held it impregnable (Amm. xxiv. 7. 1), being built on a peninsula, surrounded on three sides by the Tigris (NOTE: Kinneir, Geogr. Mem. of the Persian Empire, p. 252). It became the scene of repeated persecutions of Christianity (Ass. B. O. i. 185ff, iii. 2; lii. following, Acta Mart.); Nestorianism was favored (Ass. iii. 2. lxxxvii.). A center of Persian luxury, it fell at once and forever before Omar (Abulf. i. 233-5; Ritt. x. 172), and the Persian empire perished with it. It was replaced by the neighboring Bagdad. The history illustrates the tenacity of life in those well-chosen sites, and the character of the place, of

whose conquest Sennacherib boasted, with which Amos compared the land of Israel.

Go thence to Hamath the great Originally, a Canaanite kingdom (^{<0108>}Genesis 10:18). “The entrance to” it was assigned as the northern border of Israel (^{<0417>}Numbers 34:7,8; ^{<0135>}Joshua 13:5). In David’s time its king was at war with the king of Zobah (^{<0100>}2 Samuel 8:9,10), and made presents to David on his subdual. In Solomon’s time it had fallen under the power of the king of Zobah, from where it was called Hamath-zobah. Solomon won it from him, incorporated it with Israel, and built towns in its territory (^{<0488>}2 Chronicles 8:3,4). The “Hamathites” were, under their own king, united with Benhadad, the Hittites, and the Phoenicians in their war with Shalmanubar, and defeated by him (Cuneiform Inscriptions in Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 463. 4). Ezekiel speaks of the “border of Damascus” and “the coast of Hamath” (^{<03476>}Ezekiel 47:16; 48:1), as of places of like importance, and Zechariah (^{<03801>}Zechariah 9:1,2), of their joint subdual by Alexander. To judge from the present site, it in some respects resembled Samaria. It lay in a narrow oval valley of the Orontes; its citadel on a round hill in the center. The city rises up the steep sides of the hills which enclose it (Colossians Squire, in Walpole Mem. 323-325). Vast water-wheels,^{f208} some of a diameter of 67 (Squire, l. c. “at least 70 feet,” Burckh. l. c.), 80, 90 (Thomson, The land, ii. 278) feet, raise the water of the Orontes to supply, by aid of aqueducts, the upper city, or to water the neighboring gardens. (Burckh. 147): “The western part of its territory is the granary of northern Syria.” Even when Antiochus Epiphanes called it after himself Epiphania, its inhabitants called it after its old name (Josephus, Ant. i. 6. 2; Jerome, Qu. in ^{<01015>}Genesis 10:15). Mention occurs of it in the crusades (Ritter. 1033). In the 13th century it had its own well-known prince (Abulfeda); and has still a population of some 30,000 (Burckhardt, Ibid.).

Gath (Winepress) must, from its name have been situated in a rich country. It lay on the confines of Judea and Philistia, for Rehoboam fortified it as a border-fortress (^{<0418>}2 Chronicles 11:8). It had been contrariwise fortified by the Philistines against Judah, since, when David took it “out of the hand of the Philistines,” it had the title (^{<01001>}2 Samuel 8:1, compare ^{<03801>}1 Chronicles 18:1) “methegammah,” “bridle of the mother city,” or metropolis. It had at that time “daughter towns” (^{<03801>}1 Chronicles 18:1) dependent upon it. It must also have been near Micah’s birthplace, “Moresheth Gath,” that is, Moresheth of Gath, which in Jerome’s (Praef.

ad Mic.) time was “a small village near Eleutheropolis,” (Bethgabrin). Of Gath itself Jerome says (In ^{<300B>}Micah 1:10), “It is one of the five cities of Philistia, near the confines of Judea, and now too a very large village on the way from Eleuthcropolis to Gaza.” Eusebius says (V. Γεθ (in Joshua) where he explains it to be the place where the Enakim dwelt, that is, the Philistine Gath. Under “the Kings” v. Γεθθα , “whither the Philistines removed the ark from Ashdod,” he says,” there is yet a very large village called Giththa, on the road between Antipatris and Jamnia. And another, Geththaim.” This which Eusebius, found probably in some other authority, would make Gath the most northern of the Philistine towns, and near the sea, which is inconsistent with its being near Moresheth and a frontier-town of Judah), “about the 5th milestone from Eleutheropolis to Diospolis” (Lydda). Since the Philistines carried the ark of God from Ashdod to Gath, and thence to Ekron (^{<40B>}1 Samuel 5:8,10), it seems likely that Gath lay nearer to Ashdod than Ekron, although necessarily more inland than either, since it was a border-city to Judah. The Tel-es-Safiyeh corresponds with these conditions, lying at the entrance of the Shephelah, about 5 miles from Beit-Jibrin on the road to Lydda, (Ludd). It (Porter, Handbook, 253,254) “rises about 100 feet above the eastern ridge which it terminates, and perhaps 200 over the plain which terminates its western base. The ruins and subterranean reservoirs shew that it is a site of high antiquity, great strength, and importance.” Gath had at this time probably been taken by Uzziah who “broke down” its “wall” (^{<40B>}2 Chronicles 26:6); and since it is not mentioned with the other four Philistine cities, whose sentence is pronounced by Amos (Amos 1:7,8) himself, Zephaniah (^{<30B>}Zephaniah 2:4), and Zechariah (^{<30B>}Zechariah 9:5), it is probable that it never recovered.

Be they better than these kingdoms? The prophet seems purposely to say less than he might, in order that his hearers might have to supply the more. Calneh, Hamath, Gath, had not been more guilty against God than Ephraim, yet probably they had all been conquered: Gath by Judah; Hamath by Israel (see the note below at ^{<30B>}Amos 6:14) himself; Calneh by Assyria. Both Shalmanubar and Shamasiva conquered in Babylonia (Cuneif. Inscr. in Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 464); and Shamasiva (Ibid. 466) “declares that he took above 200 towns” in Babylonia. Amos, then, upbraids Israel for their ingratitude, both as to the original gift of their good land, and its continuance. The pagan had suffered; they, the guilty, had been spared; yet still they acted no otherwise than these pagan.

Rib.:

“What spacious, what wide border have we, boundless as the life of God and eternity!”

Lap.:

“Our hopes and the bounds of our bliss are measured, not like those of the worldly and ungodly, by the limits of a petty time or by this dot of earth, but by the boundless space of eternity and of heaven; so that we may say confidently to the ungodly, ‘Is not our border wider than your border?’”

~~<10B>~~ **Amos 6:3.** *Ye that put far away* Probably “with aversion.” They bade that day as it were, be gone. The Hebrew idiom expresses, how they would put it off, if they could; as far as in them lay, they “assigned a distance to it,” although they could not remove the day itself. The “evil day” is that same “day of the Lord,” which the scoffers or misbelievers professed to long for (~~<10B>~~ Amos 5:18). The thought that the Lord has a Day, in which to judge man, frets or frightens the irreligious, and they use different ways to get rid of it. The strong harden themselves against it, distort the belief in it, or disbelieve it. The weak and voluptuous shut their eyes to it, like the bird in the fable, as if what they dread would cease to be there, because they cease to see it.

And cause the seat (literally, the session, sitting) *of violence to come near* They dismissed the thought of the Day of account, in order that they might sin with less fear. They put from them the judgment of God, that they might exercise violence over His creatures. People do not put away the thought of God, except to invite His Enemy into their souls. But therewith, they “brought near” another “seat of violence,” not their own, but upon them. They brought near what they wished to put away, the day, in which, through the violence of the Assyrians, God would avenge their own.

Rib.:

“Let them consider this, who put no bound to their sins. For the more they obey their own will, the more they hasten to destruction; and while they think they draw near to pleasures, they draw near to everlasting woes.”

Amos 6:4. *That lie upon beds (that is, sofas) of ivory* that is, probably inlaid with ivory. The word might, in itself, express either the bed, in which they slept by night, or the divan, on which the Easterns lay at their meals; “and stretch themselves,” literally, “are poured” out,^{f209} stretching their listless length, dissolved, unnerved, in luxury and sloth, “upon their couches,” perhaps under an awning: “and eat the lambs,” probably “fatted lambs (as in ^{<1524>}Deuteronomy 32:14; ^{<1571>}Psalms 37:20; ^{<1519>}1 Samuel 15:9; ^{<2544>}Jeremiah 51:40), out of the flock,” chosen, selected out of it as the best, and “calves out of the midst of the stall;” that is, the place where they were tied up (as the word means) to be fatted. They were stall-fed, as we say, and these people had the best chosen for them.

(Rib.):

“He shews how they ‘draw nigh the seat of violence.’ They lay on beds or couches of ivory, and expended thereon the money wherewith their poor brethren were to be fed. Go now, I say not into the houses of nobles, but into any house of any rich man, see the gilded and worked couches, curtains woven of silk and gold, and walls covered with gold, while the poor of Christ are naked, shivering, shriveled with hunger. Yet stranger is it, that while this is everywhere, scarce anywhere is there who now blames it. Now I say, for there were formerly. ‘Ye array,’ Ambrose says (de Nabuthe, c. 13), ‘walls with gold, men ye bare. The naked cries before your door and you neglect him; and are careful with what marbles you clothe your pavement. The poor seeketh money, and hath it not; man asketh for bread, and thy horse champeth gold. Thou delightest in costly ornaments, while others have not meal. What judgment thou heapest on thyself, thou man of wealth! Miserable, who hast power to keep so many souls from death, and hast not the will! The jewel of thy ring could maintain in life a whole population.’ If such things are not to be blamed now, then neither were they formerly.”

Amos 6:5. *That chant to the voice of the lyre* Accompanying “the voice of the lyre” with the human voice; giving vocal expression and utterance to what the instrumental music spoke without words. The word, which Amos alone uses in this one place, describes probably^{f210} a hurried flow of unmeaning, unconsidered words, in which the rhythm of words and music was everything, the sense, nothing; much like most glees. The

English margin “quaver” has also some foundation in the root, but does not suit the idiom so well, which expresses that the act was something done “to the voice of the lyre,” accompanying the music, not altering the music itself. In fact, they would go together. An artificial, effeminate music which should relax the soul, frittering the melody, and displacing the power and majesty of divine harmony by tricks of art, and giddy, thoughtless, heartless, soulless versifying would be meet company. Debased music is a mark of a nation’s decay, and promotes it. The Hebrew music seems to have been very simple; and singing appears to have been reserved almost exclusively for solemn occasions, the temple-service, or the greeting of victory (^{<0987>}1 Samuel 18:7). “Singing men and singing women” were part of the state of David and Solomon (^{<1095>}2 Samuel 19:35; ^{<2108>}Ecclesiastes 2:8). Else the music at the feasts of the rich appears rather to be mentioned with blame (^{<2152>}Isaiah 5:12; 24:9). Songs they had (^{<1250>}Proverbs 25:20); but the songs, for which the Hebrew exiles were celebrated, and which their Babylonian masters required them to sing, “the songs of Zion” (^{<1378>}Psalms 137:3,4), were the hymns of the temple, “the Lord’s song.”

And invent to themselves instruments of music The same pains, which David employed on music to the honor of God, they employed on their light, enervating unmeaningful music, and, if they were in earnest enough, justified their inventions by the example of David. Much as people have justified our degraded, sensualizing, immodest dancing, by the religious dancing of Holy Scripture! The word can mean no other than devised. David then did “devise” and “invent” instruments of music for the service of God. He introduced into the temple-service the use of the stringed instruments, the “kinnor,” (the “lyre”) and the “nebel” (the “harp”) in addition to the cymbals. Whence these, in contrast with the trumpets, are called “the instruments of David” (^{<1426>}2 Chronicles 29:26, compare ^{<1425>}2 Chronicles 29:25, and ^{<1316>}1 Chronicles 15:16,19-21,24). Probably, in adapting them to the temple-service, he, in some way, improved the existing instrument; having been, in early youth, remarkable for his skill upon the harp (^{<0916>}1 Samuel 16:16,18,23). As he elevated the character and powers of the, perhaps rude, instrument which he found, and suited it to the service of God, so these people refined it doubtless, as they thought, and suited it for the service of luxury and sensuality. But what harm, they thought, in amending the music of their day, since so did David?

^{<1016>}**Amos 6:6.** *That drink wine in bowls* (Literally, as the English margin, “drink in bowls,” literally, “sprinkling vessels, of wine”). The word is

elsewhere used only of the “bowls,” out of which the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled. Probably Amos was referring to the first offering of the Princes in the wilderness, with whom he had already tacitly contrasted these Princes (Hengstenberg, Auth. d. Pent. p. 99. See ab. p. 152). They had shown zeal for God in offering the massive bowls for the service of the tabernacle: the like zeal had these princes for the service of their own “god (^{<5189>}Philippians 3:19), their belly.” It may be too, (since misbelief and sensuality are necessarily irreverent) that they used for their revels vessels which had at one time been employed in sprinkling the blood of their idol-sacrifices. There was no additional desecration in it. The gold and silver vessels of the temple were consecrated by being offered to God, by His hallowing of the temple through His presence, by being used in the typical sacrifices. The gold and silver, creatures of God, were desecrated by being employed in idol-worship, of which indeed sensuality was a part. Their employment in this luxury was only a continuance of their desecration, which it did but illustrate. It is nothing incredible, since among Christians, the fonts of the Church have been turned into horsetroughs by sects who disbelieved in Baptism. The vessels were, probably, large, since those offered for the tabernacle weighed 70 shekels. Private luxury vied with the fictitious sanctuary, which aped the sanctuary of God. Perhaps Amos would express the capacity of these vessels by saying, “that drink in bowls of wine.” Like swine in the trough, they immersed themselves in their drink (Thomson, Autumn), “swimming in mutual swill.”

All this they did, he expresses, habitually. He speaks of these their acts in a form expressing an ever-renewed present, “the putters off, the liers on couches of ivory, the out-stretched, the eating, the drinking,” men whose lives were spent in nothing else; the voluptuaries, sensualists, “good-fellows” of Israel.

Anoint themselves with the chief ointments Anointing the body was a sort of necessary (^{<485>}2 Chronicles 28:15) in the hot climate of the East, for bodily health. “Not” to anoint the body was the exception, as in mourning (^{<1042>}2 Samuel 14:2). But necessities become a vehicle for luxury. For health, olive-oil sufficed (^{<680>}Deuteronomy 28:40). For the service of God, a rich ointment was appointed, to which odorous substances, myrrh, cinnamon, the odoriferous reed, and cassia (^{<235>}Exodus 30:23-5). gave a scent emblematic of the fragrance of holiness. In order to separate what was sacred from ordinary uses, God forbade, on pain of death, to imitate this ointment, or “pour it on the flesh of man” (^{<123>}Exodus 30:32,33).

Luxury vied with religion, and took to itself either the same, or ointment more costly. “They anointed themselves with the chief” (kind) “of ointments;” those which held the first, highest rank among them. Nothing better or so good was left for what they thought to be the service of God, as, in times a little past, anything was thought good enough for a Church, nothing too good for a dwelling-house. Gorgeous adornments of man’s house were thought splendor and good taste and fit employment of wealth; slight adornment of the house of God was thought superstition.

But (And) *they are not grieved* (Literally, “grieve not themselves,”) admit no grief, shut out all grief, “for the affliction” (literally, “breach”) of “Joseph.” The name of the patriarch, Ephraim’s father, recalled his suffering from his brethren (from Sanct). His brethren cast him into a “pit without water” (^{<03724>}Genesis 37:24), probably an empty leaking well, (much as was that into which Jeremiah (^{<24816>}Jeremiah 38:6) was cast,) damp, fetid, and full of loathsome creatures. They “saw the anguish of his soul when he besought them, and would not hear” (^{<04421>}Genesis 42:21). But what did they? “They sat down to eat bread” (^{<03725>}Genesis 37:25). So did these rich men deal with all their brethren, all Ephraim. They suffered not in, or with, any sufferings, present or future, of individuals or the whole. “Cast off thought,” “cast off care,” is the motto of sensualists and of the worldly; “seize joyous the present hour, and leave the future,” said the pagan (Hor.). This was the effect of their luxury and life of sense. The prophet recounts, they stretched themselves listlessly, ate choice food, sang glees, drank deep, anointed themselves with the very best ointment, “and grieved” not themselves for any sufferings of their own flesh and blood. It followed, of necessity, from the rest. Luxury shuts out suffering, because any vivid knowledge of or dwelling upon sufferings must needs disturb its ease. Selfish wealth persuades itself that there is no suffering, lest it should be forced to think of it; it “will” think distress either too little, so that it can relieve itself, or so great that it cannot be relieved; or it will philosophise upon distress and misery, as though it were best relieved by its own luxuries. Any how it will not know or hear of its details, it will not admit grief. Lap.:

“Mercilessness is the own daughter of pleasure.” “This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fullness of bread, and careless ease had she and her daughters; and the hand of the poor and needy she strengthened not” (^{<26164>}Ezekiel 16:49).

“Seest thou,” says Chrysostom (Hom. 48. in Matt.), “how he blames a delicate life? For in these words he accuses not covetousness, but prodigality only. And thou eatest to excess, Christ not even for need; thou various cakes, He not so much as dry bread; thou drinkest choice wine, but on Him thou hast not bestowed so much as a cup of cold water in His thirst. Thou art on a soft, embroidered bed; He is perishing with the cold. Be then the banquets clear from covetousness, yet they are accursed because, while THOU doest all beyond thy need, to Him thou givest not even His need; and that, living in luxury on what is His!”

And yet what was this luxury, which the prophet so condemns? What, in us, were simplicity. What scarce anyone thought of diminishing, while two million, close by, were wasting away by famine’s horrors; chairs or sofas inlaid, fat lamb or veal; wine; perfumes; light music. The most delicate ingredient of those perfumes, cinnamon, enters into our food. “Looking at our times,” says a writer at the close of the 16th century (Ribera), “I marvel at the spareness of the ancients, and think that it would be well with us, if any above the poor were content with what were, of old, delicacies to kings and nobles. Happy were these times, if they could imitate even what the prophets blame in nobles. In the Gospel, “the King” who “made a marriage feast for His Son said, I have prepared My dinner, My oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage” (^{<4121>}Matthew 22:2,4). When a “fatted calf” was killed for a feast, it was thought the best cheer, as when Abraham entertained Angels, or in that feast of the Father who, when He had received back His son, said, “bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry: for this My son was dead and is alive again” (^{<4053>}Luke 15:23,24). So then the prophet accuses the nobles of luxury, because they ate fat oxen and lambs. For the table of Solomon, the wealthiest of monarchs, there were brought “fat oxen, and oxen, out of the pastures, sheep, besides hart and roebuck and fallow deer and fatted fowls” (^{<1023>}1 Kings 4:23). “Now” whatever is produced in sea or earth or sky, people think to be born to satisfy their appetites. Who could recount the manifold forms of food and condiments, which all-inventing gluttony has devised? Books had to be written; no memory sufficed. In this ocean, wealthiest patrimonies have discharged themselves and disappeared. Among the Romans, Fabius, for devouring his patrimony, was called Gurges (whirlpool). Were this the practice now, he would have many great people surnamed from him, who, poor through

gluttony, prey on the patrimonies of the poor, retain the property of the rich against their wills, and live on what is another's. It were little to consume whole patrimonies in luxury, were it not that the virtues and nerves of the mind were also consumed and vices of all sorts crept in. Shame to copy the luxury of pagan, and despise their care for maintaining temperance. We need not old examples. Such was the frugality of our Spaniards, 70 years ago, before they adopted foreign manners, that the rich had but mutton, roast and boiled, at their tables, nobles alone had poultry. Well were it then, if, in matter of food, we did only, what the prophet in his time blamed." Spain has sunk under its luxury to a third-rate power. What can await England? What can await it, when the prophet's blame were praise, and Dives is the pattern and ideal of the charity of most of us, and luxury, vanity, and selfindulgence are held to be the best way of ministering to the poor? Marvelous "imitation of Christ!" Once, to "forsake all" was to "follow" Christ. Now, to possess all, heap up all, to expend nothing save on self, and to "shew mercy on the poor" by allowing them to minister to our luxuries, is, according to the new philosophy of wealth, to be the counterfeit of Christian charity.

<1067> **Amos 6:7.** *Therefore now (that is, shortly) shall they go captive with the first (at the head) of those who go captive* They had sought eminence; they should have it. Jerome: "Ye who are first in riches, shall, the first, endure the yoke of captivity, as it is in Ezekiel, 'begin from My sanctuary' (<2006> Ezekiel 9:6), that is, from the destruction of the Temple which is holy. For 'mighty men shall be mightily tormented' (Wisdom 6:6); and, 'to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more' (<0248> Luke 12:48)."

And the banquet Probably, "the screech." The root, **j z1rjñ**^{h4797} whose consonants contain most of those of our screech, signifies the loud sharp cry, which the mind cannot control, either in revelry or distress. Here it is probably, the drunken scream, or reckless cry of revelry, whose senseless shrillness is more piercing, in its way, than the scream of distress, of which Jeremiah (<2465> Jeremiah 16:5) uses it. For it is the scream of the death of the soul. Amos seems to have purposely joined together similar harsh sibilants or guttural sounds in order the more to express the harshness of that scream of luxurious self-indulgence. **j z1rjñ**^{h4797} ... **j r1s,**^{h5628}, the screech of the outstretched." Of this he says, "it shall depart," and forever. "In that very day all his thoughts perish" (<1304> Psalm 146:4). It shall "depart;" but by

what should it be replaced to those to whom it was their god and their all? On earth, by siege, pestilence, death or captivity: after death, by hell to the unrepentant.

^{<3008>}**Amos 6:8.** *The Lord God* He who alone IS and who alone hath power, “hath sworn by Himself,” literally, “by His soul;” as our “self” comes from the same root as “soul.” Jerome: “So God saith in Isaiah, “Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth” (^{<2014>}Isaiah 1:14); not that God hath a soul, but that He speaks after the way of human feelings. Nor is it any marvel that He condescends to speak of Himself, as having a soul, seeing He speaks of Himself as having the other members, feet, hands, bowels, which are less precious than the soul. In God the Father, the head, hands, and the rest are not members, but by these words a diversity of powers is expressed. So also by the soul is intended not a substance, but the inward affections, and the seat of thought whereby God indicates His Will.” In truth, it is one and the same condescension in Almighty God, to use of Himself any words taken from our nature, our thoughts, acts, feelings, as those taken from the members of the body. It is a yet greater condescension that God should confirm the truth of His word by an oath. For we call God to witness, lest, by reason of the vast reign of falsehood among people, we should be thought not to speak true. But for God to act as though He needed the assurance of an oath in order to be believed, is more condescending, than for Him to speak as though He had a soul or limbs, such as He gave to man. Yet God,

“willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of His promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath. He swore by Himself saying, surely blessing I will bless thee” (^{<3667>}Hebrews 6:17,13,14).

“Now,” when Israel had, by apostasy, forfeited that blessing, and a portion of it was to be withdrawn from him, God, affirms by an oath that rejection of Israel. If the words, “by His soul,” are emphatic, they relate to those attributes in God of which man’s holy affections are an image. God’s love, justice, righteousness, holiness, were concerned, to vindicate the oppressed and punish the oppressor. To these He appeals. Our oaths mean, “As God is true, and as He avenges untruth, this which I say is true.” So God says, “As I am God, this is true.” God then must cease to be God, if He did not hate oppression.

I abhor the excellency of Jacob The word “excellency” is used of the Majesty of God Himself; then, since man’s relation to God is his only real greatness, God speaks of Himself as “the Excellency of Jacob” (^{<3187>}Amos 8:7); then of that “excellency” which God had given to “Jacob” (^{<3970>}Psalm 47:4). That “excellency of their strength,” He had forwarned them in the law, that He would break (^{<1359>}Leviticus 26:19). Now that Israel took as his own what he held from God, his “excellency” became pride, and God says, “I abhor” it, as a thing loathsome and abominable, and “hate his palaces.” For they had been built, adorned, inhabited, filled with luxury, in the midst of, and out of, oppression and hard-hearted exaction. He calls them Jacob, perhaps as Hosea does (^{<3812>}Hosea 12:12), to remind them of the poverty and low estate of their forefather, out of which God had raised them, and the faithfulness of their forefather in it, in contrast with their luxury and unfaithfulness.

Therefore (And) I will deliver up Originally, “shut up” (^{<8143>}Leviticus 14:23; 13:4,5, ...), then, “shut up in the hands of,” so that he should have no escape. Here, where the enemy is not spoken of, it may mean, that God “shut up the city,” so that there should be no going out or coming in, in the straitness of the siege, whereupon follows the fearful description of the ravages of the pestilence. “The city” is, what was to them, above others, “the” city, the place of their luxury pride and boast, where lay their strength, Samaria.

^{<1019>}**Amos 6:9.** *If there shall remain ten men* He probably still denounces the punishment of the rich inhabitants of the palaces, since in these only, of old, would there be found “ten men.” They died, it seems, at once, and so probably through the plague, the common companion. of the siege. The prophet had before compared them to Sodom. It may be, that, in this mention of “ten men,” he tacitly refers to the history of that destruction. Then God promised, not to destroy the city, if there were ten righteous in it (^{<1182>}Genesis 18:32). Here were “ten left,” not in one city, but in one house. Had God forgotten His loving-kindness? No! but, in Samaria, not even ten who “remained over,” and so had survived after the chastisement had begun, turned to God. All then were to be taken or destroyed. The miseries of its three years’ siege by Shalmanezar may be filled up from those of its earlier siege by Benhadad (^{<1164>}2 Kings 6:24-29), or from those of Jerusalem. The sufferings of a siege are in proportion to the obstinacy of the defense; and Samaria resisted for twice the time in which Jerusalem was reduced by famine at its first captivity.

Amos 6:10. *And a man's uncle ... and he that burneth him* Literally, "and there shall take him up his uncle and his burner," that is, his uncle who, as his next of kin, had the care of his interment, was himself the burner. Burial is the natural following out of the words, "dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return." The common burying-places (such as we find in the history of the patriarchs) were the natural expression of the belief in the Resurrection. The bodies rested together, to be raised together. The pagan burned the bodies of Christian martyrs, and scattered their ashes in mockery of the Resurrection (See for example, Ep. Ecclesiastes Vienn. et Lugd. fin. Eusebius. H. E. v. 1).

The pagan noticed that it was matter of piety with the Jews (Tac. Hist. v. 5) "to bury rather than to burn bodies." The only exceptions are the history of Saul, and this place. Both were cases of emergency. The men of Jabesh-Gilead doubtless burned the bodies of Saul and his sons (1 Samuel end), for fear the Philistines might disinter them, if buried, and renew their insults upon them. The Israelites still buried what would not be disturbed or could be concealed — the bones. David solemnly buried their remains in the sepulchre of Kish, Saul's father (¹⁰¹²2 Samuel 21:12-14). So probably here also, it is mentioned as an aggravation, that one who loved them, had to burn their bodies. He does not say, why: but mentions it, as one feature of the common suffering. Parents, brothers — all gone; a man's uncle was his "burner." There was no other interment than this, the most alien from their affections and religion. It may have been on account of the extreme infection (the opening of a forgotten burying place of those who died of the plague of London produced a virulent disease, though 1 1/2 century had elapsed), or from the delay of burial, when, death reigning all round, there had been none to bury the dead.

He who is "by the sides," that is, the furthest part "of the house." He was the one survivor of the ten, and he too, sick. The question, Is there "yet" any "with thee?" inquires whether there was anyone, alive, to succor, or dead, to burn? There was none. All, even the bodies, had now been removed; one only remained, of all the hum, din, and throng, in that abode of luxury, one only "in the extremity" of its untenanted chambers. Probably the sick man was going to speak of God. The uncle breaks in upon his "No!" with "Hush! for we may not make mention of the Name of the Lord." Times of plague are, with the most, times of religious despair. They who had not feared God in their prosperity, do nothing but fear Him then. Fear, without love, turns man more away from God. He feels then the

presence and power of God whom he had forgotten. He owns Him as the Author of his miseries; but, not having known Him before, he knows Him now in no other relation. The words then, “for not to be mentioned is the Name of the Lord,” are very probably the voice of despair. “It is useless to name Him now. We did not name His Name in life. It is not for “us” to name it now, in death.” It might be the voice of impatient aversion, which would not bear to hear of God, the Author of its woe; or it might be the voice of superstition, which would not name God’s Name, for fear of bringing fresh evil upon itself. All these grounds for not naming the Name of God and others yet worse, recur, again and again, under the pressure of a general sudden destruction. Such times being out the soul to light, as it is. Souls, which have sinned away the grace of God and are beyond its reach, pass unobserved amid the thronging activity of ordinary life. They are arrested then. They must choose then or never. Their unchanged aversion from God, then, unveils what they had been before. They choose once more, deliberately, in the face of God’s judgments, what they had habitually chosen before, and, by the dreadful nakedness of their choice of evil, become now unmitigatedly evil. The prophet gives one instance of this utter misery of body and soul, because detail of misery sets the whole calamity more before people’s eyes. In one picture, they see all. The words, or what the words imply, that, in extreme calamity, people do not mention the Name of God, come true in different minds out of different characters of irreligion.

It has also been thought, that the brief answer, “Hush!” closes the dialogue. The uncle asks, “is there yet with thee?” He answers, “None.” The other rejoins “Hush!” and the prophet assigns the ground; “for the Name of the Lord is not to be named.” If people have not sought God earlier, they have, when his hand is heavy upon them, no heart, nor time, nor thought, nor faith to seek Him.

Amos 6:11. *The Lord commandeth and He will smite* Jerome: “If He commandeth, how doth He smite? If He smiteth, how doth He command? In that thing which He “commands” and enjoins His ministers, He Himself is seen to “smite.” In Egypt the Lord declares that He killed the first-born, who, we read, were slain by “the destroyer” (⁽¹²²³⁾Exodus 12:23). The “breaches” denote probably the larger, “the cleft” the smaller ruin. The greater pile was the more greatly destroyed.

Amos 6:12. The two images both represent a toil, which people would condemn as absurd, destructive, as well as fruitless. The horse's hoofs or his limbs would be broken; the plowing-gear would be destroyed. The prophet gains the attention by the question. What then? they ask. The answer is implied by the *for*, which follows. Ye are they, who are so doing. As absurd is it to seek gain from injustice and oppression, to which God had annexed loss and woe, temporal and eternal. More easy to change the course of nature or the use of things of nature, than the course of God's Providence or the laws of His just retribution. They had changed the sweet laws of "justice" and equity "into" the "gall" of oppression, and the healthful "fruit of righteousness," whereof they had received the seed from God, into the life-destroying poison of sin. Better to have "plowed" the rock "with oxen" for food! For now, where they looked for prosperity, they found not barrenness, but death.

Others (Sanct.) understand the question as the taunt of unbelievers, trusting in the strength of Samaria, that when horses should run on their rocky eminence, or the oxen plow there, then might an enemy look for gain from investing the hill of Samaria. "Shall things which are against nature be done?" "Yes," the prophet then would answer, "for ye have done against nature yourselves. Ye, have "changed justice," the solace of the oppressed, "into wormwood," the bitterness of oppression. Well may what ye think above the laws of physical nature be done, when ye have violated the laws of moral nature. Well may the less thing be done, your destruction, secure as by nature ye seem, when ye have done the greater, violating the laws of the God of nature." Amos, however, when he refers to the sayings of the unbelievers, distinguishes them from his own.

Amos 6:13. *Who rejoice* (Literally, "the rejoicers!" Amos, as is his wont, speaks of them with contempt and wonder at their folly, "the rejoicers!" much as we say, the cowards! the renegades!) "in a thing of nought," literally, "a non-thing," ("no-whit, nought") not merely in a thing valueless, but in a "non-thing," that has no existence at all, as nothing has any substantial existence out of God. This "non-thing" was their power, strength, empire, which they thought they had, but which was soon to shrivel away as a scroll.

Which say, (as before, "the sayers!" they who have this saying habitually in their month) *have we not taken to ourselves horn?* The horn is the well-known symbol of strength which repels and tosses away what opposes it,

as the bull doth its assailant. Moses, in his blessing, had used this symbol, of the strength of the tribe of Joseph, and as being a blessing, he spoke of it, as the gift of God. “His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of buffalos; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh” (^{<16317>}Deuteronomy 33:17). To this blessing, doubtless, Zedekiah the false prophet referred (NOTE: ^{<1221>}1 Kings 22:11 Hengstenberg, Auth. d. Pent. i. 101. 131), when he “made him horns of iron, and said” to Ahab, “Thus saith the Lord, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou hast consumed them.” The Psalmist said, “through Thee will we push down our enemies,” as with a horn (^{<1945>}Psalm 44:5-7); and adds, “For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. For Thou hast saved us from our enemies.” Israel ascribed God’s gift to himself. He had been repeatedly and greatly victorious; he had conquered every enemy, with whom he had of old been at strife; he ascribed it to himself, and forfeited it. “By our own strength,” he said, instead of, “by the help of God;” as if we were to ascribe our Indian victories to our generals or our armies, and to substitute self-praise for Te Deums on days of thanksgiving.

Lap.: “The sinner rejoiceth in a non-thing. Sin IS a ‘non-thing’:

- (1) as being a thing of nought, that is, vain and valueless.
- (2) Its pleasure is fleeting; from where the Psalmist says, “all the men, whose hands are mighty, have found nothing” (^{<1915>}Psalm 76:5).
- (3) Sin brings the sinner to nothing, that is, destruction and death, temporal and eternal.
- (4) Sin is the privation of good; but privation is a mere negative; that is, nothing.
- (5) Sin deprives of God who is All and the Creator of all.
- (6) Sin is nothing, because it cleaves to and joys in creatures and opposes them and prefers them to the Creator.

For creatures, compared to the Creator, are shadows of things, not the very things, and so are nothing. For the Being and Name of God is, I AM that I AM, that is, I Am He who alone have true, full, solid, eternal, infinite, Being; but creatures participate from Me a shadow of their true

being, for their being is so poor, brief, fleeting, unstable, perishing, that, compared to Mine, they may rather be said, not to be, than to be. So then as creatures have no true being, so neither have they true good, but only a shadow of good. So also as to truth, wisdom, power, justice, holiness and other attributes. These have in God their real being; in creatures a shadow of being only. Whence God is called in Scripture alone wise (^{<5167>}Romans 16:27), alone mighty (^{<5065>}1 Timothy 6:15), alone immortal (^{<5016>}1 Timothy 6:16), alone Lord (^{<2371>}Isaiah 37:20), alone holy (^{<6654>}Revelation 15:4), alone good (^{<2189>}Luke 18:19); because He alone has true, full, uncreated and infinite wisdom, power, goodness, etc. But the sinner, in that he delights in creatures not in the Creator, delights in a shadow, a nothing, not in the true Being. But, because these shadows of creatures amid the dimness of this life appear great to man in his blindness, (as the mountains, at sunset, cast broad and deep shadows,) he admires and pursues these shadows, like the dog in the fable, who, seeing the shadow of the meat in the water, magnified in the water, snatched at it, and so lost the meat and did not attain the shadow. O Lord, dispel our darkness, lighten our eyes, that we may love and seek, not the shadows of honors, riches, and pleasures, which, like meteors, (dazzle here on earth our mind's eye, but may with fixed gaze, behold, love, and compass the real honors, riches, pleasures themselves, which Thou hast from eternity laid up and prepared in heaven for those who love Thee.”

^{<1064>}**Amos 6:14.** *But* (For,) — it WAS a non-thing, a nonexistent thing, a phantom, wherewith they rejoiced; “for behold I raise up a nation.” God is said to “raise up,” when, by His Providence or His grace, He calls forth those who had not been called before, for the office for which He designs them. Thus, He raised up judges (^{<0026>}Judges 2:16-18), delivers (^{<0009>}Judges 3:9-15), prophets (^{<1021>}Amos 2:11; ^{<2015>}Jeremiah 29:15; and of the prophet like Moses, ^{<6885>}Deuteronomy 18:15), Nazarites (^{<1021>}Amos 2:11), priests (^{<0025>}1 Samuel 2:35), kings (^{<1008>}2 Samuel 7:8), calling each separately to perform what He gave them in charge. So He is said to “raise up” even the evil ministers of His good Will, whom, in the course of His Providence, He allows to raise themselves up aloft to that eminence, so often as, in fulfilling their own bad will, they bring about, or are examples of, His righteous judgment. Thus God “raised up Hadad” as “an adversary” (^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:14) to Solomon, and again Rezon (^{<1123>}1 Kings 11:23); and the Chaldees (^{<3006>}Habakkuk 1:6). So again God says to Pharaoh, “For this have I raised thee up (^{<1016>}Exodus 9:16), to show in thee My power.” So

here He says, “I will raise up against you a nation, and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hamath.” Israel, under Jeroboam II, had recovered a wider extent of territory, than had, in her northern portion, belonged to her since the better days of Solomon. Jeroboam “recovered Damascus and Hamath” (~~2Kings~~ 2 Kings 14:28,25), which belonged to “Judah, unto Israel. He restored,” as God promised him by Jonah, “the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain. The entering of Hamath” expresses the utmost northern boundary promised to Israel (~~Numbers~~ Numbers 34:8). But this does not in itself express whether Hamath itself was included. Hamath however, and even Damascus itself, were incorporated in the bounds of Israel. The then great scourge of Israel had become part of its strength. Southward, Ammon and even Moab, had been taken into its borders. All the country on the other side of Jordan was theirs from Hamath and Damascus to the south of the Dead Sea, a space including four degrees of Latitude, as much as from Portsmouth to Durham. Amos describes the extension of the kingdom of Israel in the self-same terms as the Book of Kings; only he names as the southern extremity, “the river of the wilderness,” instead of “the sea of the wilderness.” The sea of the wilderness, that is, the Dead Sea, might in itself be either its northern or its southern extremity. The word used by Amos, defines it to be the southern. For his use of the name, “river of the wilderness,” implies:

(1) that it was a well-known boundary, a boundary as well-known to Israel on the south

(This altogether excludes the Kidron (which Gesenius would make it). Indeed the Kidron is:

(a) no border-river at all, flowing “within” Judah.

(b) It does not belong to the Arabah at all, flowing from Jerusalem, mostly through deep perpendicular defiles, to the Dead Sea (see above p. 141).

(c) It falls into the west side of the Dead Sea, not into its northern extremity), “as the entering in of Hamath” was on the north.

(2) As a boundary-river, it must have been a river on the east of the Jordan, since Benjamin formed their boundary on the west of Jordan, and mountain passes, not rivers, separated them from it.

(3) From its name, ‘river of the wilderness, or the Arabah,’ it must, in some important part of its course, have flowed in the ‘Arabah.

The ‘Arabah, (it is now well known,) is no other than that deep and remarkable depression, now called the Ghor, which extends from the lake of Gennesareth to the Red Sea (Burckh. Syr. 441, 2. Robinson, ii. 186,187). The Dead Sea itself is called by Moses too “the sea of the Arabah” (^(-RBB7)Deuteronomy 3:17; 4:49), lying, as it does, in the middle of that depression, and dividing it into two, the valley of the Jordan above the Dead Sea, and the southern portion which extends uninterrupted from the Dead to the Red Sea; and which also (although Scripture has less occasion to speak of it) Moses calls the ‘Arabah (^(-RBB8)Deuteronomy 2:8,9 (translated “plain”). See more fully Stanley, Palestine, 487). A river, which fell from Moab into the Dead Sea without passing through the Arabah, would not be called “a river of the Arabah,” but, at the most “a river of the sea of the Arabah.” Now, besides the improbability that the name, “the river of the Arabah,” should have been substituted for the familiar names, the Arnon or the Jabbok, the Arnon does not flow into the Arabah at all, the Jabbok is no way connected with the Dead Sea, the corresponding boundary in the Book of Kings. These were both boundary-rivers, the Jabbok having been the northern limit of what Moab and Ammon lost to the Amorite; the Arnon being the northern border of Moab. But there is a third boundary-river which answers all the conditions. Moab was bounded on the south by a river, which Isaiah calls “the brook of the willows,” *Nahal Ha’arabim* (⁽⁻²⁸¹⁰⁷⁾Isaiah 15:7), across which he foretells that they should transport for safety all which they had of value. A river, now called in its upper part the Wadi-el-Ahsa, and then the Wadi-es-Safieh, which now too (Burckh. Ibid. 401) “has more water than any south of the Yerka” (Jabbok), “divides the district of Kerek from that of Jebal, the ancient Gebalene” (that is, Moab from Idumaea). This river, after flowing from east to west and so forming a southern boundary to Moab, turns to the north in the Ghor or Arabah, and flows into the south extremity of the Dead Sea (See Van de Velde’s map or Kiepert’s in Porter’s Handbook, or Robinson’s map). This river then, answering to all the conditions, is doubtless that of which Amos spoke, and the boundary, which Jeroboam restored, included Moab also, (as in the most prosperous times of Israel,) since Moab’s southern border was now his border.

Israel, then, had no enemy, west of the Euphrates. Their strength had also, of late, been increasing steadily. Jehoash had, at the promise of Elisha,

thrice defeated the Syrians, and recovered cities which had been lost, probably on the west also of Jordan, in the heart of the kingdom of Israel. What Jehoash had begun, Jeroboam II, during a reign of 41 years, continued. prophets had foretold and defined the successes of both kings, and so had marked them out the more to be the gift of God. Israel ascribed it to himself; and now that the enemies, whom Israel had feared, were subdued, God says, "I will raise up an enemy, and they shall afflict thee from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness." The whole scene of their triumphs should be one scene of affliction and woe. This was fulfilled after some 45 years, at the invasion of Tiglath-pileser.

NOTES ON AMOS 7

The visions of this chapter (Amos 7) continue the direct prophecy of the last. That closed in the prophecy of the affliction of Israel through the Assyrian: this foretells three gradations, in which it took place. That spoke of a recovery of Israel after its extreme depression under Hazael; the first of these visions exhibit it as a field shorn to the ground, shooting out anew, but threatened with a fresh destruction. The chastisements are three-fold. Two, at the intercession of Amos, stop short of utter destruction; the third was final. Each also increased in severity. Such were the three invasions of the Assyrians. Pul, invited by Menahem, amid civil war, to establish him on his throne, exacted only a heavy fine. Tiglath-pileser, called in by Ahaz against Pekah, carried off the inhabitants of the east and north of Israel; the invasion of Shalmaneser ended the empire and its idolatry.

Amos 7:1. *And behold He formed* (that is, He was forming.) The very least things then are as much in His infinite Mind, as what we count the greatest. He has not simply made “laws of nature,” as people speak, to do His work, and continue the generations of the world. He Himself was still framing them, giving them being, as our Lord saith, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (~~REV~~ John 5:17). The same power of God is seen in creating the locust, as the universe. The creature could as little do the one as the other. But further, God was “framing” them for a special end, not of nature, but of His moral government, in the correction of man. He was “framing the locust,” that it might, at His appointed time, lay waste just those tracts which He had appointed to them. God, in this vision, opens our eyes, and lets us see Himself, framing the punishment for the deserts of the sinners, that so when hail, mildew, blight, caterpillars, or some other hitherto unknown disease, (which, because we know it not, we call by the name of the crop which it annihilates), waste our crops, we may think, not of secondary causes, but of our Judge. Lap.: “Fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy wind, fulfill His word, (~~REV~~ Psalm 148:8), in striking sinners as He wills. To be indignant with these, were like a dog who bit the stone wherewith it was hit, instead of the man who threw it.” Gregory on Job L. xxxiii. c. 4. L.:

“He who denies that he was stricken for his own fault, what does he but accuse the justice of Him who smiteth?”

Grasshoppers that is, locusts. The name may very possibly be derived from their “creeping” (from the Arabic jabaa) simultaneously, in vast multitudes, from the ground, which is the more observable in these creatures, which, when the warmth of spring hatches the eggs, creep forth at once in myriads. This first meaning of their name must, however, have been obliterated by use (as mostly happens), since the word is also used by Nahum of a flying locust (See the preface to Joel).

The king’s mowings must have been some regalia, to meet the state-expenses. The like custom still lingers on, here and there, among us, the “first mowth” or “first vesture,” that with which the fields are first clad, belonging to one person; the pasturage afterward, or “after-grass,” to others. The hay-harvest probably took place some time before the grain-harvest, and the “latter grass,” “after-grass,” **vqj** ; ^{<43954>} probably began to spring up at the time of the “latter rain” **vWQl jn1** ^{<44456>}. Had the grass been mown after this rain, it would not, under the burning sun of their rainless summer, have sprung up at all. At this time, then, upon which the hope of the year depended, “in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter grass,” Amos saw, in a vision, God form the locust, and “the green herb of the land” (the word includes all, that which is “for the service of man” as well as for beasts,) destroyed. Striking emblem of a state, recovering after it had been mown down, and anew overrun by a numerous enemy! Yet this need but be a passing desolation. Would they abide, or would they carry their ravages elsewhere? Amos intercedes with God, in words of that first intercession of Moses, “forgive now” (^{<0449>}Numbers 14:19). “By whom,” he adds, “shall Jacob arise?” literally, “Who shall Jacob arise?” that is, who is he that he should arise, so weakened, so half-destroyed? Plainly, the destruction is more than one invasion of locusts in one year. The locusts are a symbol (as in Joel) in like way as the following visions are symbols.

^{<3008>}**Amos 7:3.** *The Lord repented for this* God is said to “repent, to have strong compassion upon” or “over” evil, which He has either inflicted (^{<6326>}Deuteronomy 32:36; ^{<4215>}1 Chronicles 21:15), or has said that He would inflict (^{<0212>}Exodus 32:12; ^{<3023>}Joel 2:13; ^{<3080>}Jonah 3:10; ^{<4408>}Jeremiah 18:8), and which, upon repentance or prayer, He suspends or checks. Here, Amos does not intercede until after the judgment had been, in part, inflicted. He prayed, when in vision the locust “had made an end of eating the grass of the land,” and when “the fire had eaten up a part.” Nor, until Israel had suffered what these visions foretold, was he “small,” either in his

own or in human sight, or in relation to his general condition. The “this” then, “of which God repented” and said, “it shall not be,” is that further undefined evil, which His first infliction threatened. Evil and decay do not die out, but destroy. Oppression does not weary itself out, but increases. Visitations of God are tokens of His displeasure, and, in the order of His justice, rest on the sinner. Pul and Tiglath-pileser, when they came with their armies on Israel, were instruments of God’s chastening. According to the ways of God’s justice, or of man’s ambition, the evil now begun, would have continued, but that God, at the prayer of the prophet, said, “Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further” (^{<3881>}Job 38:11).

^{<3074>}**Amos 7:4.** *God called to contend by fire* that is, He “called” His people to maintain their cause with Him “by fire,” as He says, “I will plead” in judgment “with him” (Gog) “with” (that is, “by”) pestilence and blood” (^{<3382>}Ezekiel 38:22); and, “by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh” (^{<2366>}Isaiah 66:16); and, “The Lord standeth up to plead and standeth to judge the people” (^{<2313>}Isaiah 3:13). Man, by rebellion, challenges God’s Omnipotence. He will have none of Him; he will find his own happiness for himself, apart from God and in defiance of Him and His laws; he plumes himself on his success, and accounts his strength or wealth or prosperity the test of the wisdom of his policy. God, sooner or later, accepts the challenge. He brings things to the issue, which man had chosen. He “enters into judgment” (^{<2314>}Isaiah 3:14, etc.) with him. If man escapes with impunity, then he had chosen well, in rejecting God and choosing his own ways. If not, what folly and misery was his short-sighted choice; short-lived in its gain; its loss, eternal! “Fire” stands as the symbol and summary of God’s most terrible judgments. It spares nothing, leaves nothing, not even the outward form of what it destroys. Here it is plainly a symbol, since it destroys “the sea” also, which shall be destroyed only by the fire of the Day of Judgment, when

“the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (^{<6030>}2 Peter 3:10).

The sea is called the “great deep,” only in the most solemn language, as the history of the creation or the flood, the Psalms and poetical books. Here it is used, in order to mark the extent of the desolation represented in the vision.

And did eat up a part Rather literally, “The portion,” that is, probably the definite “portion” foreappointed by God to captivity and desolation. This

probably our English Version meant by “a part.” For although God calls Himself “the Portion” of Israel (^{<1830>}Deuteronomy 32:9; ^{<2406>}Jeremiah 10:16; ^{<3022>}Zechariah 2:12), and of those who are His (^{<1915>}Psalm 16:5; 73:26, etc; ^{<2406>}Jeremiah 10:16), and reciprocally He calls the people “the Lord’s portion” (^{<2420>}Jeremiah 12:10), and the land, the portion (^{<3004>}Micah 2:4) of God’s people; yet the land is nowhere called absolutely “the portion,” nor was the country of the ten tribes specially “the portion,” given by God. Rather God exhibits in vision to the prophet, the ocean burned up, and “the portion” of Israel, upon which His judgments were first to fall. To this Amos points, as “the portion.” God knew “the portion,” which Tiglath-Pileser would destroy, and when he came and had carried captive the east and north of Israel, the pious in Israel would recognize the second, more desolating scourge, foretold by Amos; they would own that it was at the prayer of the prophet that it was stayed and went no further, and would await what remained.

^{<3075>}**Amos 7:5, 6.** As our Lord repeated the same words in the Garden, so Amos interceded with God with words, all but one, the same, and with the same plea, that, if God did not help, Israel was indeed helpless. Yet a second time God spared Israel. To human sight, what so strange and unexpected, as that the Assyrian and his army, having utterly destroyed the kingdom of Damascus, and carried away its people, and having devoured, like fire, more than half of Israel, rolled back like an ebb-tide, swept away to ravage other countries, and spared the capital? And who, looking at the mere outside of things, would have thought that that tide of fire was rolled back, not by anything in that day, but by the prophet’s prayer some 47 years before? Man would look doubtless for motives of human policy, which led Tiglath-pileser to accept tribute from Pekah, while he killed Rezin; and while he carried off all the Syrians of Damascus, to leave half of Israel to be removed by his successor. Humanly speaking, it was a mistake. He “scotched” his enemy only, and left him to make alliance with Egypt, his rival, who disputed with him the possession of the countries which lay between them. If we knew the details of Assyrian policy, we might know what induced him to turn aside in his conquest. There were, and always are, human motives. They do not interfere with the ground in the mind of God, who directs and controls them. Even in human contrivances, the wheels, interlacing one another, and acting one on the other, do but transmit, the one to the other, the motion and impulse which they have received from the central force. The revolution of the earth around its own

center does not interfere with, rather it is a condition of its revolving round the center of our system, and, amidst the alternations of night and day, brings each several portion within the influence of the sun around which it revolves. The affairs of human kingdoms have their own subordinate centers of human policy, yet even thereby they the more revolve in the circuit of God's appointment. In the history of His former people God gives us a glimpse into a hidden order of things, the secret spring and power of His wisdom, which sets in motion that intricate and complex machinery which alone we see, and in the sight of which people lose the consciousness of the unseen agency. While man strives with man, prayer, suggested by God, moves God, the Ruler of all.

^{<000>}**Amos 7:7.** *Stood upon* (Rather “over” “a wall” made by “a plumbline;” lit. “a wall of a plumbline,” that is, (as our’s has it) “made” straight, perpendicular, “by” it. The wall had been “made by a lead” or “plumbline;” by it, that is, according to it, it should e destroyed. God had made it upright, He had given to it an undeviating rule of right, He had watched over it, to keep it, as He made it. Now “He stood over it,” fixed in His purpose, to destroy it. He marked its inequalities. Yet this too in judgment. He destroys it by that same rule of right wherewith He had built it. By that law, that right, those providential leadings, that grace, which we have received, by the same we are judged.

^{<000>}**Amos 7:8.** *Amos, what seest thou?* (Dionysius): “He calls the prophet by name, as a familiar friend, known and approved by Him, as He said to Moses, “I know thee by name” (^{<030>}Exodus 33:12,17). For “the Lord knoweth them that are His. What seest thou?” (^{<020>}2 Timothy 2:19). God had twice heard the prophet. Two judgments upon His people He had mitigated, not upon their repentance, but on the single intercession of the prophet. After that, He willed to be no more entreated. And so He exhibits to Amos a symbol, whose meaning He does not explain until He had pronounced their doom. “The plumbline” was used in pulling down, as well as in building up. Whence Jeremiah says, “The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion; He hath stretched out a line; He hath not withdrawn His hand from destroying; therefore He made the rampart and wall to lament” (^{<010>}Lamentations 2:8): and Isaiah; “He shall stretch out upon it the line of wateness” (as in ^{<000>}Genesis 1:2) “and the stone of emptiness” (^{<230>}Isaiah 34:11) (as in ^{<000>}Genesis 1:2): and God said of Judah, “I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the

plummet of the house of Ahab" (^{<2213>}2 Kings 21:13). Accordingly God explains the vision, "Behold I will set," that is, shortly, (literally, "am setting") "a plumbline in the midst of My people Israel." The wall, then, is not the emblem of Samaria or of any one city. It is the strength and defense of the whole people, whatever held it together, and held out the enemy. As in the vision to Belshazzar, the word "Tekel," He "weighed," was explained, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting" (^{<2767>}Daniel 5:27), so God here applies the plumbline, at once to convict and to destroy upon conviction. In this Judgment, as at the Last Day, God would not condemn, without having first made clear the justice of His condemnation. He sets it "in the midst of" His "people," showing that He would make trial of all, one by one, and condemn in proportion to the guilt of each. But the day of grace being past, the sentence was to be final. "I will not pass by them," literally, "I will not pass over" (that is, their transgressions) "to them (as in ^{<3182>}Amos 8:2) anymore," that is, I will no more forgive them.

^{<3109>}**Amos 7:9.** *The high places of Isaac* He probably calls the ten tribes by the name of Isaac, as well as of Israel, in order to contrast their deeds with the blameless, gentle piety of Isaac, as well as the much-trying faithfulness of Israel. It has been thought too that he alludes to the first meaning of the name of Isaac. His name was given from the joyous laughter at the unheard-of promise of God, to give children to those past age; their high places should be a laughter, but the laughter of mockery (So the Septuagint, and, from them, Cyril and Theodoret). The "sanctuaries" were perhaps the two great idol-temples at Bethel and Dan, over against the one "sanctuary" of God at Jerusalem; the "high places" were the shrines of idolatry, especially where God had shown mercy to the patriarchs and Israel, but also all over the land. All were to be wasted, because all were idolatrous.

I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword God speaks after the manner of people, who, having been still, arise against the object of their enmity. He makes Himself so far one with the instruments of His sentence, that, what they do, He ascribes to Himself. Jeroboam II must, from his military success, have been popular among his people. Successful valor is doubly prized, and he had both valor (^{<1248>}2 Kings 14:28, personal bravery) and success. God had "saved Israel by" His "hand" (^{<1247>}2 Kings 14:27). A weak successor is often borne with for the merits of his father. There were no wars from without which called for strong military energy

or talent, and which might furnish an excuse for superseding a faineant king. Ephraim had no ambition of foreign glory, to gratify. Zechariah, Jeroboam's son, was a sensualist (See the note at ^{<3100>}Hosea 7:7, and the introduction to Amos); but many sensualists have, at all times, reigned undisturbed. Shallum who murdered Zechariah was simply a "conspirator" (^{<1250>}2 Kings 15:10); he represented no popular impulse, and was slain himself a month (^{<1253>}2 Kings 15:13,14) after. Yet Amos foretells absolutely that the house of Jeroboam should perish by the sword, and in the next generation his name was clean put out.

^{<3070>}**Amos 7:10.** *Amaziah, the priest of Bethel* Was probably the high priest, in imitation of the high priest of the order of Aaron and of God's appointment. For the many high places around Bethel required many idol-priests; and a splendid counterfeit of the ritual at Jerusalem, which should rival it in the eyes of Israel, was part of the policy of the first Jeroboam. Amaziah was at the head of this imposture, in a position probably of wealth and dignity among his people. Like "Demetrius the silversmith" (Acts 19), he thought that the craft whereby he had his wealth was endangered. To Jeroboam, however, he says nothing of these fears. To the king he makes it an affair of state. He takes the king by what he expected to be his weak side, fear for his own power or life. "Amos hath conspired against thee." So to Jeremiah "the captain of the ward" said, "Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans" (^{<2673>}Jeremiah 37:13). And the princes; "Let this man be put to death, for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt" (^{<2684>}Jeremiah 38:4). And of our Lord they said to Pilate,

"If thou let this Man go, thou art not Caesar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, is an enemy to Caesar" (^{<692>}John 19:12).

And of the Apostles;

"these men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans" (^{<4161>}Acts 16:20,21);

and, "these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also — and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus" (^{<4176>}Acts 17:6,7). And so the pagan, who were ever conspiring against the Roman Emperors, went on accusing the early

Christians as disloyal to the Emperors, factious, impious, because they did not offer sacrifices for them to false gods, but prayed for them to the True God (Tertullian, Apol. Section 28-38. pp. 68-80. Oxford Translation ad Scap. Section 2. pp. 143, 4. Ibid.). Some doubtless, moved by the words of Amos, had forsaken the state-idolatry, reformed their lives, worshiped God with the prophet; perhaps they were called in contempt by his name, “Amosites” or “Judaizers,” and were counted as “his” adherents, not as the worshipers of the one true God, “the God of their fathers.” Whence Amaziah gained the plea of a “conspiracy,” of which Amos was the head. For a “conspiracy” cannot be of one man. The word, by its force, signifies “banded;” the idiom, that he “banded” others “together against” (^{<0218>}1 Samuel 22:8,13; ^{<1157>}1 Kings 15:27; 16:9,16; ^{<1209>}2 Kings 10:9; 14:19; 15:10,15,25; 21:23) the king. To us Amaziah attests the power of God’s word by His prophet; “the land,” that is, the whole people, “is not able to bear his words,” being shaken through and through.

^{<1071>}**Amos 7:11.** *For thus Amos saith* Amos had said, “Thus saith the Lord;” he never fails to impress on them, whose words he is speaking. Amaziah, himself bound up in a system of falsehood and imposture, which, being a creature-worship, gave itself out as the worship of the true God, believed all besides to be fraud. Fraud always suspects fraud; the irreligious think devotion, holiness, saintliness to be hypocrisy: vice imagines virtue to be well-masked vice. The false priest, by a sort of law of corrupt nature, supposed that Amos also was false, and treats his words as the produce of his own mind.

Jeroboam shall die by the sword Amos had not said this. The false prophet distorts the last words of Amos, which were yet in his ears, and reports to Jeroboam, as said of himself, what Amos had just said of his “house.” Amos “was” opposed to the popular religion or irreligion of which Jeroboam was the head, to the headship over which he had succeeded. Jeroboam, like the Roman Emperors, was high priest, Pontifex Maximus, in order to get the popular worship under his control. The first Jeroboam had himself consecrated the calf-priests (^{<0218>}1 Samuel 22:8,13; ^{<1157>}1 Kings 15:27; 16:9,16; ^{<1209>}2 Kings 10:9; 14:19; 15:10,15,25; 21:23). Amos bore also the message from God, that the reprieve, given to the house of Jehu, would not be extended, but would end. Amaziah would act on the personal fears of the king, as though there had been some present active conspiracy against him. A lie, mixed with truth, is the most deadly form of falsehood, the truth serving to gain admittance for the lie, and color it, and seeming to

require explanation, and being something to fall back upon. Since thus much is certainly true, why should not the rest be so? In slander, and heresy which is slander against God, truth is used to commend the falsehood; and falsehood, to destroy the truth. The poison is received the more fearlessly because wrapped up in truth, but loses none of its deadliness.

And Israel shall surely be led away captive This was a suppression of truth, as the other was a falsification of it. Amaziah omits both the ground of the threat, and the hope of escape urged and impressed upon them. On the one side he omits all mention of what even such a king as Jeroboam would respect, the denunciation of oppression of the poor, injustice, violence, robbery, and all their other sins against man. On the other hand, he omits the call to repentance and promises on it, "seek ye the Lord and live." He omits too the prophet's intercession for his people, and selects the one prophecy, which could give a mere political character to the whole. Suppression of truth is a yet subtler character of falsehood. Hence, witnesses on oath are required to tell, not the truth only, but the whole truth. Yet in daily life, or in accusation of others, in detraction, or evil-speaking, people daily act, as though, suppression were no lie.

<1072> **Amos 7:12.** Jeroboam apparently took no account of the false priest's message. Perhaps the memory of the true prophecies of Elisha as to the successes of his father, and of Jonah as to his own, fulfilled in his own person and still recent, inspired him with a reverence for God's prophets. To know his motive or motives, we must know his whole character, which we do not. Amaziah, failing of his purpose, uses his name as far as he dares. "Seer, go flee thee." He probably uses the old title for a prophet, in reference to the visions which he had just related. Perhaps, he used it in irony also ("Either in irony, in that he lies throughout, or because seeing, etc." (as below) Jerome). "Thou who seest, as thou deemest, what others see not, "visionary! visionist!" flee thee," that is, for thy good; (he acts the patron and the counselor;) "to the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and there prophesy." Worldly people always think that those whose profession is religious make "a gain of godliness." "He is paid for it," they say. "Whose bread I eat, his song I sing." Interested people cannot conceive of one disinterested; nor the worldly, of one unworldly; nor the insincere, of one sincere. Amaziah thought then that Amos, coming out of Judah, must be speaking in the interests of Judah; perhaps, that he was in the pay of her king. Anyhow, prophecies, such as his against Israel, would be acceptable there and be well paid. The words are courteous, like so much patronizing

language now, as to God or His revelation, His prophets or His Apostles, or His divine word. The words are measured: the meaning blasphemy. Perhaps, like the Scribes and Pharisees afterward, “he feared the people” (~~<1212>~~Matthew 21:26; ~~<4155>~~Acts 5:26). (Jerome):

“Seeing that there were many among the people who heard him gladly, he dared not do him any open wrong, lest he should offend them.”

~~<3073>~~**Amos 7:13.** *It is the king's chapel* Better, as in the English margin, “sanctuary.” It is the name for “the sanctuary” of God. “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (~~<1238>~~Exodus 25:8). “Ye shall reverence My sanctuary: I am the Lord” (~~<1890>~~Leviticus 19:30; 26:2). It is most often spoken of as, “The sanctuary”^{f211} elsewhere, but always with emphasis, of reverence, sanctity, devotion, protection, it is called “His sanctuary; My sanctuary; Thy sanctuary; the sanctuary of the Lord of God, of his God (In all, 23 times); whence God Himself is called “a sanctuary” (~~<2384>~~Isaiah 8:14; ~~<3116>~~Ezekiel 11:16), as a place of refuge. In three places only, is it called the sanctuary of Israel; “her sanctuary.” God, in His threat to cast them off, says, “I will bring your sanctuaries to desolation” (~~<1835>~~Leviticus 26:31); Jeremiah laments, “the pagan have entered into her sanctuary” (~~<2010>~~Lamentations 1:10); he says,

“the place of our sanctuary is a glorious high throne from the beginning” (~~<2472>~~Jeremiah 17:12),

inasmuch as God was enthroned there. In this case too it is “the sanctuary for” Israel, not a mere property of Israel. “The sanctuary of God” could not be called the sanctuary of any man. One man could not so appropriate “the sanctuary.” God had ordained it for Himself. His presence had sanctified it. Heresy, in unconsciousness, lets out more truth than it means. A high priest at Jerusalem could not have said this. He knew that “the temple” was the “sanctuary” of God, and could not have called it the “king's sanctuary.” The sanctuary at Bethel had no other sanction, than what it had from the king. Jeroboam I consecrated it and its priests (~~<1123>~~1 Kings 12:31-33); and from him it and they had their authority. Amaziah wished to use a popular plea to rid himself of Amos. Bethel was “the king's sanctuary and the house,” not of God, but “of the kingdom,” that is, “the house,” which had the whole royal sanction, which with its Worship was the creature of royal authority, bound up in one with the kingdom, and belonging to it. Or it may be, “a royal house,” (not a palace, or court, for

the king's palace was at Samaria, but) "a royal temple," the state-Church. So the Arians betrayed their worldliness by dating one of their Creeds from the Roman Consuls of the year, its month and day" (Ath. Counc. Arim. Sel. Section 3. Treat. ag. Arian. p. 76. Oxford Translation), thereby to show all thinking people, that their faith dates, not of old but now." Their faith was of yesterday.

"They are accustomed to say," says Jerome, "the Emperor communicates with us, and, if anyone resists them, immediately they calumniate. 'Actest thou against the Emperor? Despisest thou the Emperor's mandate?' And yet we may think, that many Christian kings who have persecuted the Church of God, and essayed to establish the Arian impiety in the whole world, surpass in guilt Jeroboam king of Israel. He despised the message of a false priest, nor would he make any answer to his suggestions. But these, with their many Amaziahpriests, have slain Amos the prophet and the priest of the Lord by hunger and penury, dungeons and exile."

^{<3074>}**Amos 7:14.** *I was no prophet* The order of the words is emphatic. "No prophet I, and no prophet's son I, for a herdsman I, and dresser of sycamores." It may be, Amos would meet, for the people's sake, Amaziah's taunt. He had a living, simple indeed, yet that of the prophets was as simple. But chiefly he tells them of the unusual character of his mission. He did not belong to the order of the prophets, nor had he been educated in the schools of the prophets, nor had he any human training. He was thinking of nothing less; he was doing the works of his calling, until "God took him from following the flock," and gave him his commission. Rup.: "He promises humbly what he had been, what he had been made, not by merits, but by grace, that he had not assumed the prophetic office by hereditary right, nor had he begun to prophesy out of his own mind, but, being under the necessity of obeying, he had fulfilled the grace and the command of God who inspired and sent Him." Twice he repeats, "The Lord took me; the Lord said unto me;" inculcating that, what Amaziah forbade, God bade. All was of God. "He" had but obeyed. Jerome: "As then the Apostles, when the Scribes and Pharisees forbade them to teach in the Name of Jesus, answered, 'We must obey God rather than man' (^{<4152>}Acts 5:29), so Amos, when forbidden by the idol-priests to prophesy, not only prophesies, shewing that he feared God bidding, more than their forbidding, but he boldly and freely denounces the punishment of him who endeavored to forbid and hinder the word of God." Rup.: "heaven

thundered and commanded him to prophesy; the frog croaked in answer out of his marsh, ‘prophesy no more.’”

^{<1076>}**Amos 7:16.** Amaziah then was in direct rebellion and contradiction against God. He was in an office forbidden by God. God’s word came to him. He had his choice; and, as people do, when entangled in evil courses, he chose the more consciously amiss. He had to resign his lucrative office and to submit to God speaking to him through a shepherd, or to stand in direct opposition to God, and to confront God; and in silencing Amos, he would silence God. But, like one who would arrest the lightning, he draws it on his own head. Amos contrasts the word of Amaziah, and the word of God; Rup.: “Hear thou the word of the Lord; Thou sayest; prophesy not against Israel. Therefore thus saith the Lord.” Not only will I not cease to prophesy against Israel, but I will also prophesy to thee. Hear now thine own part of the prophecy.”

Drop not The form of expression, (not the word) is probably taken from Moses.

“My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass” (^{<1077>}Deuteronomy 32:2).

Micah speaks of the word as used by those who forbade to prophesy, as though the prophecy were a continual wearisome “dropping.” God’s word comes as a gentle dew or soft rain, not beating down but refreshing; not sweeping away, like a storm, but sinking in and softening even hard ground, all but the rock; gentle, so as they can bear it. God’s word was to people, such as they were toward it; dropping like the dew on those who received it; wearing, to those who hardened themselves against it. It drops in measure upon the hearts which it fertilizes, being adapted to their capacity to receive it. And so contrariwise as to the judgments with which God’s prophets are charged. (Jerome):

“The prophets do not discharge at once the whole wrath of God, but, in their threatenings, denounce little drops of it.”

^{<1077>}**Amos 7:17.** *Thy wife shall be a harlot* These were, and still are, among the horrors of war. His own sentence comes last, when he had seen the rest, unable to hinder it. Against his and her own will, she should suffer this. Jerome: “Great is the grief, and incredible the disgrace, when the

husband, in the midst of the city and in the presence of all, cannot hinder the wrong done to his wife,^{f212} for the husband had rather hear that his wife had been slain, than defiled.” What he adds “thy daughters” (as well as his “sons”) “shall fall by the sword,” is an unwonted barbarity, and not part of the Assyrian customs, who carried off women in great numbers, as wives for their soldiery (Fox Talbot, Assyrian texts). Perhaps Amos mentions the unwonted cruelty, that the event might bring home the more to the minds of the people the prophecies which relate to themselves. When this had been fulfilled before his eyes (Jerome),

“Amaziah himself, who now gloried in the authority of the priesthood, was to be led into captivity, die in a land polluted by idols, yet not before he saw the people whom he had deceived, enslaved and captive.”

Amos closes by repeating emphatically the exact words, which Amaziah had alleged in his message to Jeroboam; “and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land.” He had not said it before in these precise words. Now he says it, without reserve of their repentance, as though he would say, “Thou hast pronounced thine own sentence; thou hast hardened thyself against the word of God; thou hardenest thy people against the word of God; it remains then that it should fall on thee and thy people.” Rup.: “How and when the prophecy against Amaziah was fulfilled, Scripture does not relate. He lies hid amid the mass of miseries” (See the introduction to Amos). Scripture hath no leisure to relate all which befalls those of the viler sort “The majesty of Holy Scripture does not lower itself to linger on baser persons, whom God had rejected.

NOTES ON AMOS 8

<318B> Amos 8:1, 2. *Thus hath the Lord God showed me* The sentence of Amaziah pronounced, Amos resumes just where he left off, before Amaziah broke in upon him. His vehement interruption is like a stone cast into the deep waters. They close over it, and it leaves no trace. Amos had authenticated the third vision; “Thus hath the Lord God shewed me.” He resumes in the self-same calm words. The last vision declared that the end was certain; this, that it was at hand.

A basket of summer fruit The fruit was the latest harvest in Palestine. When it was gathered, the circle of husbandry was come to its close. The sight gives an idea of completeness. The symbol, and the word expressing it, coincide. The fruit-gathering **5yq1** ^{<47019>}, like our “crop,” was called from “cutting.” So was the word, “end,” “cutting off,” in **5qe** ^{<47093>}. At harvest-time there is no more to be done for that crop. Good or bad, it has reached its end, and is cut down. So the harvest of Israel was come. The whole course of God’s providences, mercies, chastenings, visitations, instructions, warnings, in spirations, were completed. “What could have been done more to My vineyard, God asks (**<23704>** Isaiah 5:4), that I have not done in it?” “To the works of sin, as of holiness, there is a beginning, progress, completion;” a “sowing of wild oats,” as people speak, and a ripening in wickedness; a maturity of people’s plans, as they deem; a maturity for destruction, in the sight of God. There was no more to be done. heavenly influences can but injure the ripened sinner, as dew, rain, sun, but injure the ripened fruit Israel was ripe, but for destruction.

<318B> Amos 8:3. *The songs of the temple shall be howlings* Literally, “shall howl.” It shall be, as when mirthful music is suddenly broken in upon, and, through the sudden agony of the singer, ends in a shriek or yell of misery. When sounds of joy are turned into wailing, all must be complete sorrow. They are not hushed only, but are turned into their opposite. Since Amos is speaking to, and of, Israel, “the temple” is, doubtless, here the great idol-temple at Bethel, and “the songs” were the choral music, with which they counterfeited the temple-music, as arranged by David, praising (they could not make up their minds which,) Nature or “the God of nature,” but, in truth, worshipping the creature. The temple was often strongly built and on a height, and, whether from a vague hope of help from God, (as in the

siege of Jerusalem by the Romans,) or from some human trust, that the temple might be respected, or from confidence in its strength, or from all together, was the last refuge of the all-but-captive people. Their last retreat was often the scene of the last reeling strife, the battle-cry of the assailants, the shrieks of the defenseless, the groans of the wounded, the agonized cry of unyielding despair. Some such scene the prophet probably had before his mind's eye, for he adds;

There shall be "many dead bodies," literally, "Many the corpse in every place." He sees it, not as future, but before him. The whole city, now so thronged with life, "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely," lies before him as one scene of death; every place thronged with corpses; none exempt; at home, abroad, or, which he had just spoken of, the temple; no time, no place for honorable burial. "They," literally, "he casts forth, hush!" Each casts forth those dear to him, as "dung on the face of the earth" (^{<1818D>}Jeremiah 8:2, etc.). Grief is too strong for words. Living and dead are hushed as the grave. "Large cities are large solitudes," for want of mutual love; in God's retribution, all their din and hum becomes anew a solitude.

^{<1818D>}**Amos 8:4.** *Here ye this, ye that swallow* Or, better in the same sense, "that pant for the needy;" as Job says, "the hireling panteth for the evening" (^{<1818D>}Job 7:2). They "panted for the poor," as the wild beast for its prey; and "that to make the poor" or (better, as the Hebrew text,) "the meek";^{f213} those not poor only, but who, through poverty and affliction, are "poor in spirit" also, "to fail." The land being divided among all the inhabitants, they, in order "to lay field to field" (^{<2318B>}Isaiah 5:8), had to rid themselves of the poor. They did rid themselves of them by oppression of all sorts.

^{<1818D>}**Amos 8:5.** *When will the new moon be gone?* They kept their festivals, though weary and impatient for their close. They kept sabbath and festival with their bodies, not with their minds. The Psalmist said, "When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" (^{<1918D>}Psalm 42:2). These said, perhaps in their hearts only which God reads to them, "when will this service be over, that we may be our own masters again?" They loathed the rest of the sabbath, because they had, thereon, to rest from their frauds. He instances "the new moons" and "sabbaths," because these, recurring weekly or monthly, were a regular hindrance to their covetousness.

The “ephah” was a measure containing 72 Roman pints or nearly 1 1/10 of an English bushel; the shekel was a fixed weight, by which, up to the time of the captivity (^{<10812>}2 Samuel 18:12; ^{<11219>}1 Kings 20:39; ^{<24319>}Jeremiah 32:9), money was still weighed; and that, for the price of bread also (^{<25810>}Isaiah 55:2). They increased the price both ways, dishonestly and in hypocrisy, paring down the quantity which they sold, and obtaining more silver by fictitious weights; and weighing in uneven balances. All such dealings had been expressly forbidden by God; and that, as the condition of their remaining in the land which God had given them.

“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house divers measures, a great and a small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight; a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (^{<65213>}Deuteronomy 25:13-15).

Sin in wrong measures, once begun is unbroken. All sin perpetuates itself. It is done again, because it has been done before. But sins of a man’s daily occupation are continued of necessity, beyond the simple force of habit and the ever-increasing dropsy of covetousness. To interrupt sin is to risk detection. But then how countless the sins, which their poor slaves must needs commit hourly, whenever the occasion comes! And yet, although among us human law recognizes the divine law and annexes punishment to its breach, covetousness sets both at nought. When human law was enforced in a city after a time of negligence, scarcely a weight was found to be honest. Prayer went up to God on “the sabbath,” and fraud on the poor went up to God in every transaction on the other six days. We admire the denunciations of Amos, and condemn the makebelieve service of God. Amos denounces us, and we condemn ourselves. Righteous dealing in weights and measures was one of the conditions of the existence of God’s former people. What must then be our national condition before God, when, from this one sin, so many thousand, thousand sins go up daily to plead against us to God?

^{<31816>}**Amos 8:6.** *That we may buy* Or, indignantly, “To buy the poor!” literally, “the afflicted,” those in “low” estate. First, by dishonesty and oppression they gained their lands and goods. Then the poor were obliged to sell themselves. The slight price, for which a man was sold, showed the more contempt for “the image of God.” Before, he said, “the needy” were

“sold for a pair of sandals” (^{<3116>}Amos 2:6); here, that they were bought for them. It seems then the more likely that such was a real price for man.

And sell the refuse Literally, the “falling of wheat,” that is, what fell through the sieve, either the bran, or the thin, unfilled, grains which had no meal in them. This they mixed up largely with the meal, making a gain of that which they had once sifted out as worthless; or else, in a time of dearth, they sold to people what was the food of animals, and made a profit on it. Infancy and inexperience of cupidity, which adulterated its bread only with bran, or sold to the poor only what, although unnourishing, was wholesome! But then, with the multiplied hard-dealing, what manifoldness of the woe!

^{<3118>}**Amos 8:7.** *By the excellency of Jacob* that is, by Himself who was its Glory, as Samuel calls Him “the Strength” (^{<3159>}1 Samuel 15:29) or the Glory of Israel. Amos had before said, “God sware by His Holiness” and “by Himself” or “His soul.” Now, in like way, He pledges that Glory wherewith He was become the Glory of His people. He reminds them, WHO was the sole Source of their glory; not their calves, but Himself, their Creator; and that He would not forget their deeds. “I will not forget any,” literally, “all;” as David and Paul say, “all flesh,” all living men, “shall not be justified,” that is, none, no one, neither the whole nor any of its parts. Amos brings before the mind ALL their actions, and then says of all and each, the Lord will not forget them. God must cease to be God, if He did not do what He sware to do, punish the oppressors and defrauders of the poor.

^{<3118>}**Amos 8:8.** *Shall not the land tremble for this?* (Lap.):

“For the greater impressiveness, he ascribes to the insensate earth sense, indignation, horror, trembling. For all creation feels the will of its Creator.”

“It shall rise up wholly as a flood,” literally, “like the river.” It is the Egyptian name for “river, which Israel brought with it out of Egypt, and is used either for the Nile, or for one of the artificial “trenches,” derived from it. “And it shall be cast out and drowned,” literally, “shall toss to and fro” as the sea, “and sink^{f214} as the river of Egypt.” The prophet represents the land as heaving like the troubled sea. As the Nile rose, and its currents met and drove one against the other, covered and drowned the whole land like one vast sea, and then sank again, so the earth should rise, lift up itself, and

heave and quake, shaking off the burden of man's oppressions, and sink again. It may be, he would describe the heaving, the rising and falling, of an earthquake. Perhaps, he means that as a man forgot all the moral laws of nature, so inanimate nature should be freed from its wonted laws, and shake out its inhabitants or overwhelm them by an earthquake, as in one grave.

Amos 8:9. *I will cause the sun to go down* Darkness is heaviest and blackest in contrast with the brightest light; sorrow is saddest, when it comes upon fearless joy. God commonly, in His mercy, sends heralds of coming sorrow; very few burst suddenly on man. Now, in the meridian brightness of the day of Israel, the blackness of night should fall at once upon him. Not only was light to be displaced by darkness, but "then," when it was most opposite to the course of nature. Not by gradual decay, but by a sudden unlooked-for crash, was Israel to perish. Pekah was a military chief; he had reigned more than seventeen years over Israel in peace, when, together with Rezin king of Damascus, he attempted to extirpate the line of David, and to set a Syrian, one "on of Tabea" (^{<2306>}Isaiah 7:6), on his throne. Ahaz was weak, with no human power to resist; his "heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind" (^{<2302>}Isaiah 7:2). Tiglath-pileser came upon Pekah and carried off the tribes beyond Jordan (^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:29). Pekah's sun set, and all was night with no dawn. Shortly after, Pekah himself was murdered by Hoshea (^{<1253>}2 Kings 15:30), as he had himself murdered Pekahiah. After an anarchy of nine years, Hoshea established himself on the throne; the nine remaining years were spent in the last convulsive efforts of an expiring monarchy, subdual to Shalmaneser, rebellious alliance with So, king of Egypt, a three years' siege, and the lamp went out (^{<1271>}2 Kings 17:1-9).

And I will darken the earth at noon-day To the mourner "all nature seems to mourn." "Not the ground only," says Chrysostom in the troubles at Antioch (Hom. 2 on the Statues, Section 2), "but the very substance of the air, and the orb of the solar rays itself seems to me now in a manner to mourn and to shew a duller light. Not that the elements change their nature, but that our eyes, confused by a cloud of sorrow, cannot receive the light from it's rays purely, nor are they alike impressible. This is what the prophet of old said mourning, 'Their sun shall set to them at noon, and the day shall be darkened.' Not that the sun was hidden, or the day disappeared, but that tile mourners could see no light even in mid-day, for the darkness of their grief." No eclipse of the sun, in which the sun might

seem to be shrouded in darkness at mid-day, has been calculated which should have suggested this image to the prophet's mind. It had been thought, however, that there might be reference to an eclipse of the sun which took place a few years after this prophecy, namely, Feb. 9. 784, B.C. the year of the death of Jeroboam II.^{f215} This eclipse did reach its height at Jerusalem a little before mid-day, at 11:24 a.m.^{f216} An accurate calculation, however, shows that, although total in southern latitudes, the line of totality was, at the longitude of Jerusalem or Samaria, about 11 degrees south Latitude, and so above 43 degrees south of Samaria, and that it did not reach the same latitude as Samaria until near the close of the eclipse, about 64 degrees west of Samaria in the easternmost part of Thibet.^{f217} (Mr. Main's letter):

The central eclipse commenced in the southern Atlantic Ocean, passed nearly exactly over Helena (Every place here mentioned was "rigorously computed" by Mr. Quirling), reached the continent of Africa in Lower Guinea, traversed the interior of Africa, and left it near Zanzibar, went through the Indian Ocean and entered India in the Gulf of Gambay, passed between Agra and Allahabad into Tibet and reached its end on the frontiers of China."

The eclipse then would hardly have been noticeable at Samaria, certainly very far indeed from being an eclipse of such magnitude, as could in any degree correspond with the expression, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon."

Ussher suggests, if true, a different coincidence.^{f218} "There was an eclipse of the sun of about 10 digits in the Julian year 3923 (791 B.C.) June 24, in the Feast of Pentecost; another, of about 12 digits, 20 years afterward, 3943, 771 B.C., Nov. 8, on the Day of the Feast of Tabernacles; and a third of more than 11 digits, on the following year 3944, May 5, on the Feast of the Passover. Consider whether that prophecy of Amos does not relate to it, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day, and I will turn your feasts into mourning." Which, as the Christian fathers have adapted in an allegorical sense to the darkness at the time of our Lord's Passion in the Feast of the Passover, so it may have been fulfilled, in the letter, in these three great eclipses, which darkened the day of the three festivals in which all the males were bound to appear before the Lord. So that as, among the Greeks, Thales, first, by astronomical science, predicted eclipses of the sun (See Rawlinson, on

Herodotus, i. 74. T. i. p. 212), so, among the Hebrews, Amos first seems to have foretold them by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.” The eclipses, pointed out by Ussher, must have been the one total, the others very considerable.²¹⁹ Beforehand, one should not have expected that an eclipse of the sun, being itself a regular natural phaenomenon, and having no connection with the moral government of God, should have been the subject of the prophet’s prediction. Still it had a religious impressiveness then, above what it has now, on account of that wide-prevailing idolatry of the sun. It exhibited the object of their false worship, shorn of its light and passive. If Ussher is right as to the magnitude of those eclipses in the latitude of Jerusalem, and as to the correspondence of the days of the solar year, June 24, Nov. 8, May 5, in those years, with the days of the lunar year upon which the respective feasts fell, it would be a remarkable correspondence. Still the years are somewhat arbitrarily chosen, the second only 771 B.C., (on which the house of Jehu came to an end through the murder of the weak and sottish Zechariah,) corresponding with any marked event in the kingdom of Israel. On the other hand, it is the more likely that the words, “I will cause the sun to go down at noon,” are an image of a sudden reverse, in that Micah also uses the words as an image, “the sun shall go down upon the prophets and the day shall be dark upon” (or, “over”) “them” (~~3106~~ Micah 2:6).

~~3180~~ **Amos 8:10.** *I will turn your feasts into mourning* He recurs to the sentence which he had pronounced (~~3088~~ Amos 8:3), before he described the avarice and oppression which brought it down. Hosea too had foretold, “I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days, etc” (~~2011~~ Hosea 2:11). So Jeremiah describes, “the joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning” (~~2165~~ Lamentations 5:15). The Book of Tobit bears witness how these sayings of Amos lived in the hearts of the captive Israelites. The word of God seems oftentimes to fail, yet it finds those who are His. “I remembered,” he said, “that prophecy of Amos, your feasts shall be turned into mourning” (Tobit 2:6).

The correspondence of these words with the miracle at our Blessed Lord’s Passion, in that “the earth was darkened in the clear day, at noon-day,” was noticed by the earliest fathers (Irenaeus iv. 33. 12. Tertullian in Mare. iv. 42. Cyprian, Test. ii. 23. p. 58. Oxford Translation Cyril, Cat. 13:25. Eusebius, Dem. Ev. x. 6), and that the more, since it took place at the Feast of the Passover, and, in punishment for that sin, their “feasts were

turned into mourning,” in the desolation of their country and the cessation of their worship.

I will bring up sackcloth (that is, the rough coarse haircloth, which, being fastened with the girdle tight over the loins (see above ^{<3008>} Joel 1:8,13, pp. 107,109), was wearing to the frame) “and baldness upon every head.” The mourning of the Jews was no half-mourning, no painless change of one color of becoming dress for another. For the time, they were dead to the world or to enjoyment. As the clothing was coarse, uncomely, distressing, so they laid aside every ornament, the ornament of their hair also (as English widows used, on the same principle, to cover it). They shored it off; each sex, what was the pride of their sex; the men, their beards; the women, their long hair. The strong words, “baldness, is balded (^{<2466>} Jeremiah 16:6), shear (^{<3000>} Micah 1:16; ^{<2472>} Jeremiah 7:29), hew off, enlarge thy baldness” (Micah, loc. cit.), are used to show the completeness of this expression of sorrow. None exempted themselves in the universal sorrow; “on every head” came up “baldness.”

And I will make it (probably, the whole state and condition of things, everything, as we use our “it”) *as the mourning of an only son* As, when God delivered Israel from Egypt, “there was not,” among the Egyptians: “a house where there was not one dead (^{<2123>} Exodus 12:30), and one universal cry arose from end to end of the land, so now too in apostate Israel. The whole mourning should be the one most grievous mourning of parents, over the one child in whom they themselves seemed anew to live.

And the end thereof as a bitter day Most griefs have a rest or pause, or wear themselves out. “The end” of this should be like the beginning, nay, one concentrated grief, a whole day of bitter grief summed up in its close. It was to be no passing trouble, but one which should end in bitterness, an unending sorrow and destruction; image of the undying death in hell.

^{<3081>} **Amos 8:11.** *Not a famine for bread* He does not deny that there should be bodily famine too; but this, grievous as it is, would be less grievous than the famine of which he speaks, “the famine of the word of the Lord.” In distress we all go to God. Rib.:

“They who now cast out and despise the prophets, when they shall see themselves besieged by the enemy, shall be tormented with a great hunger of hearing the word of the Lord from the mouths of the prophets, and shall find no one to lighten their distresses. This

was most sad to the people of God; ‘we see not our tokens; there is not one prophet more; there is not one with us who understandeth, how long!’ (^{<194D>}Psalm 74:9).”

Even the profane, when they see no help, will have recourse to God. Saul, in his extremity, “inquired of the Lord and He answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets” (^{<0206>}1 Samuel 28:6). Jeroboam sent his wife to inquire of the prophet Ahijah about his son’s health (^{<114D>}1 Kings 14:2,3). They sought for temporal relief only, and therefore found it not.

^{<0182>}**Amos 8:12.** *They shall wander* Literally, “reel.” The word is used of the reeling of drunkards, of the swaying to and fro of trees in the wind, of the quivering of the lips of one agitated, and then of the unsteady seeking of persons bewildered, looking for what they know not where to find. “From sea to sea,” from the sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean, that is, from east to west, “and from the north even to the sunrising,” round again to the east, from where their search had begun, where light should be, and was not. It may be, that Amos refers to the description of the land by Moses, adapting it to the then separate condition of Ephraim,

“your south border shall be from the extremity of the Salt Sea (Dead Sea) eastward — and the goings out of it shall be at the sea, and for the western border ye shall have the great sea for a border. And this shall be your north border — and the border shall descend and shall reach to the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward” (^{<064B>}Numbers 34:3-12).

Amos does not mention “the south,” because “there” alone, where they might have found, where the true worship of God was, they did not seek. Had they sought God in Judah, instead of seeking to aggrandize themselves by its subdual, Tiglath-pileser would probably never have come against them. One expedition only in the seventeen years of his reign was directed westward (Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 470), and that was at the petition of Ahaz.

The principle of God’s dealings, that, in certain conditions of a sinful people, He will withdraw His word, is instanced in Israel, not limited to it. God says to Ezekiel,

“I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb; and shalt not be to them a reprover, for it is a rebellious house” (^{<1025>}Ezekiel 3:26);

and Ezekiel says,

“Destruction shall come upon destruction, and rumor shall be upon rumor, and they shall seek a vision from the prophet, and the law shall perish from the priest and counsel from the ancients” (^{<1025>}Ezekiel 7:26).

(from Chrysostom in ^{<1011>}Isaiah 6:1. Hom. 4. T. vi. p. 130):

“God turns away from them, and checks the grace of prophecy. For since they neglected His law, He on His side, stays the prophetic gift. “And the word was precious in those days, there was no open vision,” that is, God did not speak to them through the prophets; He breathed not upon them the Spirit through which they spake. He did not appear to them, but is silent and hidden. There was silence, enmity between God and man.”

^{<1083>}**Amos 8:13.** In this hopelessness as to all relief, those too shall fail and sink under their sufferings, in whom life is freshest and strongest and hope most buoyant. Hope mitigates any sufferings. When hope is gone, the powers of life, which it sustains, give way. “They shall faint for thirst,” literally, “shall be mantled over, covered” (The metaphor occurs both in Hebrew and Arabic), as, in fact, one fainting seems to feel as if a veil came over his brow and eyes. “Thirst,” as it is an intenser suffering than bodily hunger, includes sufferings of body and mind. If even over those, whose life was firmest, a veil came, and they fainted for thirst, what of the rest?

^{<1084>}**Amos 8:14.** *Who swear* Literally, “the swearing,” they who habitually swear. He assigns, at the end, the ground of all this misery, the forsaking of God. God had commanded that all appeals by oath should be made to Himself, who alone governs the world, to whom alone His creatures owe obedience, who alone revenges.

“Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve Him and swear by His Name” (^{<1063>}Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20).

On the other hand Joshua warned them,

“Neither make mention of the name of their gods nor cause to swear by them nor serve them” (^{<4637>}Joshua 23:7).

But these “sware by the sin of Samaria,” probably “the calf at Bethel,” which was near Samaria and the center of their idolatry, from where Hosea calls it “thy calf.” “Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off. The calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces” (^{<3885>}Hosea 8:5,6). He calls it “the guilt of Samaria,” as the source of all their guilt, as it is said of the princes of Judah using this same word,

“they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served idols, and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass” (^{<1448>}2 Chronicles 24:18).

“And say, thy god, O Dan! liveth,” that is, as surely as thy god liveth! by the life of thy god! as they who worshiped God said, “as the Lord liveth!” It was a direct substitution of the creature for the Creator, an ascribing to it the attribute of God; “as the Father hath life in Himself” (^{<4836>}John 5:26). It was an appeal to it, as the Avenger of false-swearing, as though it were the moral Governor of the world.

The manner of Beersheba liveth! Literally, “the way.” This may be, either the religion and worship of the idol there, as Paul says, “I persecuted this way unto the death” (^{<4424>}Acts 22:4, add ^{<4812>}Acts 9:2; 19:9,23), from where Muhammed learned to speak of his imposture, as “the way of God.” Or it might mean the actual “way to Beersheba,” and may signify all the idolatrous places of worship in the way there. They seem to have made the way there one long avenue of idols, culminating in it. For Josiah, in his great destruction of idolatry,

“gathered all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places, where the priests sacrificed from Gebah to Beersheba” (^{<1238>}2 Kings 23:8);

only, this may perhaps simply describe the whole territory of Judah from north to south. Anyhow, Beersheba stands for the god worshiped there, as, “whoso sware by the Temple, swear,” our Lord tells us, “by it and by Him that dwelleth therein” (^{<4121>}Matthew 23:21).

NOTES ON AMOS 9

Amos 9:1. *I saw the Lord* He saw God in vision; yet God no more, as before, asked him what he saw. God no longer shows him emblems of the destruction, but the destruction itself. Since Amos had just been speaking of the idolatry of Samaria, as the ground of its utter destruction, doubtless this vision of such utter destruction of the place of worship, with and upon the worshipers, relates to those same idolaters and idoltries (Jerome, Theodoret understand it of “the altar” at Jerusalem). True, the condemnation of Israel would become the condemnation of Judah, when Judah’s sins, like Israel’s, should become complete. But directly, it can hardly relate to any other than those spoken of before and after, Israel. “The altar,” then, “over” (not, “upon”) which Amos sees God “stand,” is doubtless the altar on which Jeroboam sacrificed, “the altar” which he set up over-against the altar at Jerusalem, the center of the calf-worship, whose destruction the man of God foretold on the day of its dedication. There where, in counterfeit of the sacrifices which God had appointed, they offered would-be-atoning sacrifices and sinned in them, God appeared, standing, to behold, to judge, to condemn. “And He said, smite the lintel,” literally, “the chapter,” or “capital,” probably so called from “crowning” the pillar with a globular form, like a pomegranate. This, the spurious outward imitation of the true sanctuary, God commands to be stricken, “that the posts,” or probably “the thresholds, may shake.” The building was struck from above, and reeled to its base. It does not matter, whether any blow on the capital of a pillar would make the whole fabric to shake. For the blow was no blow of man. God gives the command probably to the Angel of the Lord, as, in Ezekiel’s vision of the destruction of Jerusalem, the charge to destroy was given to six men (~~Amos~~ Ezekiel 9:2). So the first-born of Egypt, the army of Sennacherib, were destroyed by an Angel (~~Exodus~~ Exodus 12:23; ~~2 Kings~~ 2 Kings 19:34,35). An Angel stood with his sword over Jerusalem (~~2 Samuel~~ 2 Samuel 24:1,15,16), when God punished David’s presumption in numbering the people. At one blow of the heavenly Agent the whole building shook, staggered, fell.

And cut them in the head, all of them.^{f220} This may be either by the direct agency of the Angel, or the temple itself may be represented as falling on the heads of the worshipers. As God, through Jehu, destroyed all the worshipers of Baal in the house of Baal, so here He foretells, under a like

image, the destruction of all the idolaters of Israel. He had said, “they that swear by the sin of Samaria — shall fall and never rise up again.” Here he represents the place of that worship the idolaters, as it seems, crowded there, and the command given to destroy them all. All Israel was not to be destroyed. “Not the least grain” was to “fall upon the earth” (^{<3000>}Amos 9:9). Those then here represented as destroyed to the last man, must be a distinct class. Those destroyed in the temple must be the worshipers in the temple. In the Temple of God at Jerusalem, none entered except the priests. Even the space “between the porch and the altar” was set apart for the priests. But heresy is necessarily irreverent, because, not worshiping the One God, it had no Object of reverence. Hence, the temple of Baal was full “from end to end” (^{<2002>}2 Kings 10:21), and the worshipers of the sun at Jerusalem turned

“their backs toward the Temple,” and “worshiped the sun toward the east, at the door of the Temple, between the porch and the altar” (^{<2186>}Ezekiel 8:16; 11:1).

The worshipers of the calves were commanded to “kiss” (^{<2810>}Hosea 13:2) them, and so must have filled the temple, where they were.

And I will slay the last of them The Angel is bidden to destroy those gathered in open idolatry in one place. God, by His Omniscience, reserved the rest for His own judgment. All creatures, animate or inanimate, rational or irrational, stand at His command to fulfill His will. The mass of idolaters having perished in their idolatry, the rest, not crushed in the fall of the temple, would fain flee away, but “he that fleeth shall not flee,” God says, to any good “to themselves;” yea, although they should do what for man is impossible, they should not escape God.

^{<3000>}**Amos 9:2.** Height or depth are alike open to the Omnipresent God. The grave is not so awful as God. The sinner would gladly “dig through” into hell, bury himself, the living among the dead, if so he could escape the sight of God. But thence, God says, “My hand shall take them,” to place them in His presence, to receive their sentence. Or if, like the rebel angels, they could “place” their “throne amid the stars” (^{<2842>}Isaiah 14:12-14) of God thence will I bring them down,” humbling, judging, condemning.

^{<3000>}**Amos 9:3.** He had contrasted heaven and hell, as places impossible for man to reach; as I David says, “If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold Thee” (^{<3008>}Psalms 139:8). Now, of places in

a manner accessible, he contrasts Mount Carmel, which rises abruptly out of the sea, with depths of that ocean which it overhangs. Carmel was in two ways a hiding place.

(1) Through its caves (some say 1,000,^{f221} some 2,000) with which it is perforated, whose entrance sometimes scarcely admits a single man; so close to each other, that a pursuer would not discern into which the fugitive had vanished; so serpentine within, that, “10 steps apart,” says a traveler (Schulz, Leit. d. Hochstens, v. 186. Paulus, Reisen, vii. 43), “we could hear each others’ voices, but could not see each other.” (v. Schubert, iii. 205): “Carmel is perforated by a hundredfold greater or lesser clefts. Even in the garb of loveliness and richness, the majestic Mount, by its clefts, caves, and rocky battlements, excites in the wanderer who sees them for the first time, a feeling of mingled wonder and fear. A whole army of enemies, as of nature’s terrors, could hide themselves in these rock-clefts.”

(2) Its summit, about 1800 feet above the sea (V. de Velde, Mem. 177), “is covered with pines and oaks, and lower down with olive and laurel trees” (Richter, 66). These forests furnished hiding places to robberhordes (Strab. 16. 2. 28) at the time of our Lord. In those caves, Elijah probably at times was hidden from the persecution of Ahab and Jezebel. It seems to be spoken of as his abode (~~1~~¹ Kings 18:19), as also one resort of Elishas (~~2~~² Kings 2:25; 4:25). Carmel, as the western extremity of the land, projecting into the sea, was the last place which a fugitive would reach. If he found no safety there, there was none in his whole land. Nor was there by sea;

And though they be hid (rather, “hide themselves”) *from My sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent* The sea too has its deadly serpents. Their classes are few; the individuals in those classes are much more numerous than those of the land-serpents (Cantor, in Zoolog. Trans. T. ii. n. xxi. p. 306). Their shoals have furnished to sailors tokens of approaching land (Cantor, in Zoolog. Trans. T. ii. n. xxi. p. 306). Their chief abode, as traced in modern times, is between the Tropics.^{f222} The ancients knew of them perhaps in the Persian gulf or perhaps the Red Sea^{f223} shows that he must have known the creature. “The most beautiful kind of snake in the world is that which lives in the waters too; they are called hydri; ‘inferior in venom to none of the serpents.’“ N. H. xxix. 4. 22. More than half of the Red Sea is within the tropics, and it is, from its narrowness perhaps and the hot winds which blow over it from the deserts,

one of the warmest seas; but it has been very little examined. Burckhardt says (Syria, 449) of the Gulf of Akaba, “the sands on the shore everywhere bore the impression of the passage of serpents, crossing each other in many directions. Ayd (an Arab fisher) told me that serpents were very common in these parts, that the fishermen were very much afraid of them.” But these must have been land serpents. It is possible that both the Hebrews and Pliny knew of them through the commerce with India). All are (Cantor, p. 303) “highly venomous” and (Cantor, p. 307) “very ferocious.” (Cantor, p. 309):

“The virulence of their venom is equal to that of the “most” pernicious land-serpents.”

All things, with their will or without it through animal instinct, as the serpent, or their savage passions, as the Assyrian, fulfill the will of God. As, at His command, the fish whom He had prepared, swallowed Jonah, for his preservation, so, at His “command, the serpent” should come forth from the recesses of the sea to the sinner’s greater suffering.

~~<100>~~ **Amos 9:4. Captivity**, at least, seemed safe. The horrors of war are over. Men enslave, but do not commonly destroy those whom they have once been at the pains to carry captive. Amos describes them in their misery, as “going” willingly, gladly, “into captivity before their enemies,” like a flock of sheep. Yet “thence” too, out of “the captivity,” God would command the sword, and it should slay them. So God had forewarned them by Moses, that captivity should be an occasion, not an end, of slaughter.

“I will scatter you among the pagan, and will draw out a sword after you” (~~<100>~~ Leviticus 26:33).

“And among these nations shalt thou find no ease — and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life” (~~<100>~~ Deuteronomy 28:65,66).

The book of Esther shows how cheaply the life of a whole nation was held by Eastern conquerors; and the book of Tobit records, how habitually Jews were slain and cast out unburied (Tobit 1:17; 2:3). The account also that Sennacherib (Tobit 1:18) avenged the loss of his army, and “in his wrath killed many,” is altogether in the character of Assyrian conquerors.

Unwittingly he fulfilled the command of God, “I will command the sword and it shall slay them.”

I will set mine eyes upon them for evil So David says,

“The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to root out the remembrance of them from off the earth” (^{<15845>}Psalm 34:15,16).

The Eye of God rests on each creature which He hath made, as entirely as if He had created it alone. Every moment is passed in His unvarying sight. But, as man “sets his eye” on man, watching him and with purpose of evil, so God’s Eye is felt to be on man in displeasure, when sorrow and calamity track him and overtake him, coming he knows not how in unlooked-for ways and strange events. The Eye of God upon us is our whole hope and stay and life. It is on the Confessor in prison, the Martyr on the rack, the poor in their sufferings, the mourner in the chamber of death, for good. What when everywhere that Eye, the Source of all good, rests on His creature only for evil! “and not for good,” he adds; “not,” as is the wont and the Nature of God; “not,” as He had promised, if they were faithful; “not,” as perhaps they thought, “for good.” He utterly shuts out all hope of good. It shall be all evil, and no good, such as is hell.

^{<1096>}**Amos 9:5.** And who is He who should do this? God, at whose command are all creatures. This is the hope of His servants; from where Hezekiah begins his prayer, “Lord of hosts, God of Israel” (^{<2376>}Isaiah 37:16). This is the hopelessness of His enemies. “That toucheth the land” or “earth, and it shall melt,” rather, “hath melted.” His Will and its fulfillment are one. “He spake, and it was; He commanded and it stood fast” (^{<1339>}Psalm 33:9). His Will is first, as the cause of what is done; in time they co-exist. He hath no need to put forth His strength; a touch, the slightest indication of His Will, sufficeth. If the solid earth, how much more its inhabitants! So the Psalmist says,

“The pagan raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted” (^{<946>}Psalm 46:6).

The hearts of men melt when they are afraid of His presence; human armies melt away, dispersed; the great globe itself shall dissolve into its ancient chaos at His Will.

Amos 9:6. *He that buildeth His stories* The word commonly means “steps,” nor is there any reason to alter it. We read of “the third heavens” (^{<4712>}2 Corinthians 12:2), the heavens of heavens (^{<5104>}Deuteronomy 10:14; ^{<1027>}1 Kings 8:27; ^{<5804>}Psalms 148:4); that is, heavens to which this heaven is as earth. They are different ways of expressing the vast unseen space which God has created, divided, as we know, through the distance of the fixed stars, into countless portions, of which the lower, or further removed, are but as “steps” to the presence of the Great King, where, “above all heavens” (^{<4010>}Ephesians 4:10), Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God. It comes to the same, if we suppose the word to mean “upper chambers.” The metaphor would still signify heavens above our heavens.

And hath founded His troop (literally, band (It is used of “a bunch of hyssop” (^{<1022>}Exodus 12:22); “bands’ of a yoke” (^{<2806>}Isaiah 58:6): “a band of men” (^{<1025>}2 Samuel 2:25))

in the earth Probably, “founded His arch upon the earth,” that is, His visible heaven, which seems, like an arch, to span the earth. The whole then describes” all things visible and invisible;” all of this our solar system, and all beyond it, the many gradations to the Throne of God. (Dionysius):

“He daily “buildeth His stories in the heavens,” when He raiseth up His saints from things below to heavenly places, presiding over them, ascending in them. In devout wayfarers too, whose “conversation is in heaven (^{<5083>}Philippians 3:20), He ascendeth, sublimely and mercifully indwelling their hearts. In those who have the fruition of Himself in those heavens, He ascendeth by the glory of beatitude and the loftiest contemplation, as He walketh in those who walk, and resteth in those who rest in Him.”

To this description of His power, Amos, as before (^{<3088>}Amos 5:8), adds that signal instance of its exercise on the ungodly, the flood, the pattern and type of judgments which no sinner escapes. God then hath the power to do this. Why should He not?

Amos 9:7. *Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto Me, O children of Israel!* Their boast and confidence was that they were children of the patriarch, to whom God made the promises. But they, not following the faith nor doing the deeds of Israel, who was a “prince with God,” or of Abraham, the father of the faithful, had, for “Bene Israel,” children of Israel, become as “Bene Cushim, children of the Ethiopians,” descendants

of Ham, furthest off from the knowledge and grace of God, the unchangeableness of whose color was an emblem of unchangeableness in evil.

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (^{<24133>}Jeremiah 13:23).

Have I not brought up (Did I not bring up) *Israel out of the land of Egypt?* Amos blends in one their plea and God’s answer. God by bringing them up out of Egypt, pledged His truth to them to be their to protect and preserve them. True! so long as they. retained God as their God, and kept His laws. God chose them, that they might choose Him. By casting Him off, as their Lord and God, they cast themselves off and out of God’s protection. By estranging themselves from God, they became as strangers in His sight. His act in bringing them up from Egypt had lost its meaning for them. It became no more than any Other event in His Providence, by which He brought up “the Philistines from Caphtor,” who yet were aliens from Him, and “the Syrians from Kir,” who, He had foretold, should be carried back there.

This immigration of the Philistines from Caphtor must have taken place before the return of Israel from Egypt. For Moses says, “The Caphtorim, who came forth from Caphtor” had at this time “destroyed the Avvim who dwelt in villages unto Gazah, and dwelt in their stead” (^{<48123>}Deuteronomy 2:23) An entire change in their affairs had also taken place in the four centuries and a half since the days of Isaac. In the time of Abraham and Isaac, Philistia was a kingdom; its capital, Gerar. Its king had a standing army, Phichol being “the captain of the host” (^{<02122>}Genesis 21:22; 26:26): he had also a privy councillor, Ahuzzath (^{<0235>}Genesis 26:26). From the time after the Exodus, Philistia had ceased to be a kingdom, Gerar disappears from history; the power of Philistia is concentrated in five new towns, Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, Ekron, with five heads, who consult and act as one (see above, the note at Amos 1:6-8). The Caphtorim are in some sense also distinct from the old Philistines. They occupy a district not co-extensive with either the old or the new land of the Philistines. In the time of Saul, another Philistine clan is mentioned, the Cherethite. The Amalekites made a marauding inroad into the south country of the Cherethites; (^{<0304>}1 Samuel 30:14); which immediately afterward is called “the land of the Philistines” (^{<0316>}1 Samuel 30:16). Probably then, there

were different immigrations of the same tribe into Palestine, as there were different immigrations of Danes or Saxons into England, or as there have been and are from the old world into the new, America and Australia. They, were then all merged in one common name, as English, Scotch, Irish, are in the United States. The first immigration may have been that from the Casluhim, “out of whom came Philistim” (^{<0104>}Genesis 10:14); a second, from the Caphtorim, a kindred people, since they are named next to the Casluhim (^{<0104>}Genesis 10:14), as descendants of Mizraim. Yet a third were doubtless the Cherethim. But all were united under the one name of Philistines, as Britons, Danes, Saxons, Normans, are united under the one name of English. Of these immigrations, that from Caphtor, even if (as seems probable) second in time, was the chief; which agrees with the great accession of strength, which the Philistines had received at the time of the Exodus; from where the Mediterranean had come to be called by their name, “the sea of the Philistines” (^{<0231>}Exodus 23:31): and, in Moses’ song of thanksgiving, “the inhabitants of Philistia” are named on a level with “all the inhabitants of Canaan” (^{<0154>}Exodus 15:14,15); and God led His people by the way of Mount Sinai, in order not to expose them at once to so powerful an enemy (^{<0137>}Exodus 13:17). A third immigration of Cherethim, in the latter part of the period of the Judges, would account for the sudden increase of strength, which they seem then to have received. For whereas heretofore those whom God employed to chasten Israel in their idolatries, were Kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Hazor, Midian, Amalek, and the children of the East (Judges 3—10:5), and Philistia had, at the beginning of the period, lost Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron (^{<0118>}Judges 1:18), to Israel, and was repulsed by Shamgar, thenceforth, to the time of David, they became the great scourge of Israel on the west of Jordan, as Ammon was on the east.

The Jewish traditions in the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and three Targums, agree that Caphtor was Cappadocia, which, in that it extended to the Black Sea, might be callad “I, seacoast,” literally, “habitable land, as contrasted with the sea which washed it, whether it surrounded it or no. The Cherethites may have come from Crete, as an intermediate resting place in their migrations.

^{<008>}**Amos 9:8.** *Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful kingdom*
The sinful kingdom may mean each

“sinful kingdom,” as Paul says, God “will render unto every man according to his deeds — unto them who do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile” (Romans 2:6-9).

His “Eyes” are “on the sinful kingdom,” whatsoever or wheresoever it be, and so on Israel also: “and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth.” In this case, the emphasis would be on the, “I will not “utterly” destroy.” God would destroy sinful kingdoms, yet Israel, although sinful, He would not “utterly” destroy, but would leave a remnant, as He had so often promised. Yet perhaps, and more probably, the contrast is between “the kingdom” and “the house of Israel. The kingdom,” being founded in sin, bound up inseparably with sin, God says, “I will destroy from off the face of the earth,” and it ceased forever. Only, with the kingdom, He says, “I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,” to whom were the promises, and to whose seed, whosoever were the true Israel, those promises should be kept. So He explains;

Amos 9:9. *For lo! I will command!* Literally, “lo! see, I am commanding.” He draws their attention to it, as something which shall shortly be; and inculcates that He is the secret disposer of all which shall befall them. “And I will sift the house of Israel among all nations.” Amos enlarges the prophecy of Hosea, “they shall be wanderers among the nations.” He adds two thoughts; the violence with which they shall be shaken, and that this their unsettled life, to and fro, shall be not “among the nations” only, but “in all” nations. In every quarter of the world, and in well-nigh every nation in every quarter, Jews have been found. The whole earth is, as it were, one vast sieve in the Hands of God, in which Israel is shaken from one end to the other. There has been one ceaseless tossing to and fro, as the grain in the sieve is tossed from side to side, and rests nowhere, until all is sifted. Each nation in whom they have been found has been an instrument of their being shaken, sifted, severed, the grain from the dirt and chaff; And yet in their whole compass, “not the least grain,” no solid grain, not one grain, should “fall to the earth.” The chaff and dust would be blown away by the air; the dirt which clave to it would fall through; but “no one grain.” God, in all these centuries, has had an eye on each soul of His people in their dispersion throughout all lands. The righteous too have been shaken up and down, through and through; yet not one soul has been lost, which, by the help of God’s Holy Spirit, willed truly

and earnestly to be saved. Before Christ came, they who were His, believed in Him who should come; when He came, they who were His were converted to Him; as Paul saith,

“Hath God cast away His people? God forbid! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin — God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew — At this present time also there is a remnant, according to the election of grace” (^{<510>}Romans 11:1,2,5).

Rib.: “What is here said of all, God doth daily in each of the elect. For they are ‘the wheat’ of God, which, in order to be ‘laid up in’ the heavenly ‘garner,’ must be pure from chaff and dust. To this end He sifts them by afflictions and troubles, in youth, manhood, old age, wheresoever they are, in whatsoever occupied, and proves them again and again. At one time the elect enjoyeth tranquility of mind, is bedewed by heavenly refreshments, prayeth as he wills, loveth, gloweth, hath no taste for ought except God. Then again he is dry, experienceth the heaven to be as brass, his prayer is hindered by distracting thoughts, his feet are as lead to deeds of virtue, his ‘hands bang down,’ his ‘knees’ are ‘feeble’” (^{<512>}Hebrews 12:12), he dreads death; he sticks fast, languishes. He is shaken in a sieve, that he may mistrust self, place his hope in God, and the dust of vain-glory may be shaken off. He is proved, that it may appear whether he cleave to God for the reward of present enjoyment, or for the hope of future, for longing for the glory of God and for love of Himself. God suffereth him also to be sifted by the devil through various temptations to sin, as he said to the Apostle, ‘Simon, lo! Satan hath desired you, to sift you as wheat’” (^{<523>}Luke 22:31). But this is the power of God, this His grace to the elect, this the devil attaineth by his sifting, that the dust of immoderate self love, of vain confidence, of love of the world, should fall off: this Satan effecteth not, that the least deed which pertaineth to the inward house and the dwelling which they prepare in their souls for God, should perish. Rather, as we see in holy Job, virtues will increase, grow, be strengthened.”

^{<1910>}**Amos 9:10.** *All the sinners of My people shall perish* At the last, when the longsuffering of God has been despised to the uttermost, His Providence is exact in His justice, as in His love. As not “one grain should fall to the earth,” so not one sinner should escape. Jerome: “Not because they sinned aforetime, but because they persevered in sin until death. The

Aethiopians are changed into sons of God, if they repent; and the sons of God pass away into Aethiopians, if they fall into the depth of sin.”

Which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us Their security was the cause of their destruction. They perished the more miserably, being buoyed up by the false confidence that they should not perish. So it was in both destructions of Jerusalem. Of the first, Jeremiah says to the false prophet Hananiah, “Thus saith the Lord, Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron” (^{<28:13>}Jeremiah 28:13); and to Zedekiah, “Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak unto thee; so shall it be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth — thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon, and thou shalt burn this city with fire” (^{<38:20,23>}Jeremiah 38:20,23; add ^{<27:9,10,19>}Jeremiah 27:9,10,19). At the second, while thee Christians (mindful of our Lord’s words) fled to Pella, the Jews were, to the last, encouraged by their false prophets to resist. “The cause of this destruction,” at the burning of the temple, says their own historian (Josephus, B. J. 6. 5. Section 2. 3), “was a false prophet, who on that day proclaimed to those in the city, ‘God commands to go up to the temple, to receive the signs of deliverance.’ There were too, at that time, among the people many prophets suborned by the tyrants, bidding them await the help from God, that they might not desert, and that hope might prevail with those, who were above fear and restraint. Man is soon persuaded in calamity. And when the deceiver promises release from the evils which are upon him, the sufferer gives himself wholly up to hope. These deceivers then and liars against God at this time mispersuaded the wretched people, so that they neither regarded, nor believed, the plain evident prodigies, which foretokened the coming desolation, but, like men stupefied, who had neither eyes nor mind, disobeyed the warnings of God.” Then, having related some of the prodigies which occurred, he adds (Josephus, B. J. 6. 5. Section 4);

“But of these signs’ some they interpreted after their own will, some they despised, until they were convicted of folly by the capture of their country and their own destruction.”

So too now, none are so likely to perish forever, as they “who say, The evil shall not overtake us.” “I will repent hereafter.” “I will make my peace with God before I die.” “There is time enough yet.” “Youth is for pleasure, age for repentance.” “God will forgive the errors of youth, and the heat of our

passions.” “Any time will do for repentance; health and strength promise long life;” “I cannot do without this or that now.” “I will turn to God, only not yet.” “God is merciful and full of compassion.” Because Satan thus deludes thousands upon thousands to their destruction, God cuts away all such vain hopes with His word, “All the sinners of My people shall die which say, the evil shall not overtake nor come upon us.”

Amos 9:11. *In that day I will raise up* Amos, as the prophets were taught to do, sums up his prophecy of woe with this one full promise of overflowing good. For the ten tribes, in their separate condition, there was no hope, no future. He had pronounced the entire destruction of “the kingdom” of Israel. The ten tribes were, thenceforth, only an aggregate of individuals, good or bad. They had no separate corporate existence. In their spiritual existence, they still belonged to the one family of Israel; and, belonging to it, were heirs of the promises made to it. When no longer separate, individuals out of its tribes were to become Apostles to their whole people and to the Gentiles. Of individuals in it, God had declared His judgment, anticipating the complete exactness of the Judgment of the Great Day. “All the sinners of” His “people” should “die” an untimely death “by the sword;” not one of those who were the true grain should perish with the chaff.

He now foretells, how that salvation, of those indeed His own, should be effected through the house of David, in whose line Christ was to come. He speaks of the house of David, not in any terms of royal greatness; he tells, not of its palaces, but of its ruins. Under the word “tabernacle,” he probably blends the ideas, that it should be in a poor condition, and yet that it should be the means whereby God should protect His people. The “succah, tabernacle” (translated “booth” in Jonah) (^{<3045>}Jonah 4:5; ^{<0337>}Genesis 33:17), was originally a rude hut, formed of “intertwined” branches. It is used of the cattle-shed (^{<0337>}Genesis 33:17), and of the rough tents used by soldiers in war (^{<0111>}2 Samuel 11:11), or by the watchman in the vineyard (^{<2008>}Isaiah 1:8; ^{<8278>}Job 27:18), and of those wherein God “made the children of Israel to dwell, when” He “brought them out of the land of Egypt (^{<0238>}Leviticus 23:43). The name of the feast of “tabernacles, Succoth,” as well as the rude temporary huts (Leviticus 40, see the note at ^{<8121>}Hosea 12:9) in which they were commanded to dwell, associated the name with a state of outward poverty under God’s protection. Hence, perhaps, the word is employed also of the secret place of the presence of God (^{<0981>}Psalms 18:11; ^{<8329>}Job 36:29). Isaiah, as well as Amos, seems, in

the use of the same word (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 4:6), to hint that what is poor and mean in man's sight would be, in the Hands of God, an effectual protection. This "hut of David" was also at that time to be "fallen." When Amos prophesied, it had been weakened by the schism of the ten tribes, but Azariah, its king, was mighty (⁴⁴⁰⁶2 Chronicles 26:6-15). Amos had already foretold the destruction of the "palaces of Jerusalem by fire" (³⁰⁸⁶Amos 2:5). Now he adds, that the abiding condition of the house of David should be a state of decay and weakness, and that from that state, not human strength, but God Himself should "raise" it. "I will raise up the hut of David, the fallen." He does not say, of "that" time, "the hut that is fallen," as if it were already fallen, but "the hut, the fallen," that is, the hut of which the character should then be its falling, its caducity. So, under a different figure, Isaiah prophesied, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stump (^{2310B}Isaiah 11:1) of Jesse, and a Branch shall put forth from its roots." When the trunk was hewn down even with the ground, and the rank grass had covered the "stump," that "rod" and "Branch" should come forth which should rule the earth, and "to" which "the Gentiles should seek" (^{2311D}Isaiah 11:10). From these words of Amos, "the Son of the fallen," became, among the Jews, one of the titles of the Christ. Both in the legal and mystical schools the words of Amos are alleged, in proof of the fallen condition of the house of David, when the Christ should come. "Who would expect," asks one (Bereshith Rabba S. 88. fin. quoted by Schoettg. loc. gen. n. 18. p. 70), "that God would raise up the fallen tabernacle of David? and yet it is said, 'I will raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down.'" And who would hope that the whole world should become one band? as it is written, "Then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one shoulder" (^{368D}Zephaniah 3:9). This is no other than the king Messiah." And in the Talmud (Sanhedr. f. 96. 2. Schoettg. de Mess. p. 16);

"R. Nachman said to R. Isaac; Hast thou heard when 'the Son of the fallen' shall come? He answered, Who is he? R. Nachman; The Messiah. R. Isaac; Is the Messiah so called? R. Nachman; Yes; 'In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down.'"

And close up Literally, "wall up, the breaches thereof." The house of David had at this time sustained breaches. It had yet more serious breaches to sustain thereafter. The first great breach was the rending off of the ten tribes. It sustained breaches, through the Assyrians; and yet more when

itself was carried away captive to Babylon, and so many of its residue fled into Egypt. Breaches are repaired by new stones; the losses of the house of David were to be filled up by accessions from the Gentiles. God Himself should “close up the breaches;” so should they remain closed; and “the gates of hell should not prevail against” the Church which He builded. Amos heaps upon one another the words implying destruction. A “hut” and that “falling; breaches; ruins;” (literally, “his ruined, his destructions”). But he also speaks of it in a way which excludes the idea of “the hut of David,” being “the royal Dynasty” or “the kingdom of Judah.” For he speaks of it, not as an abstract thing, such as a kingdom is, but as a whole, consisting of individuals. He speaks not only of “the hut of David,” but of “‘their (fem.)’ breaches,” “‘his’ ruins,” that God would “build ‘her’ up,” “that ‘they’ (masc.) may inherit;” using apparently this variety of numbers and genders (Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, i. 447 8 ed. 2), in order to show that he is speaking of one living whole, the Jewish Church, now rent in two by the great schism of Jeroboam, but which should be reunited into one body, members of which should win the pagan to the true faith in God. “I will raise up,” he says, “the tabernacle of David, the fallen, and will wall up ‘their’ breaches,” (the breaches of the two portions into which it had been rent) and I will raise up “his” ruins (the “ruined places” of David) and I will build “her” (as one whole) as in the days of old, (before the rent of the ten tribes, when all worshiped as one), that “they,” (masculine) that is, individuals who should go forth out of her, “may inherit, etc.”

<101> **Amos 9:12.** *That they may possess* rather, “inherit

the remnant of Edom The restoration was not to be for themselves alone. No gifts of God end in the immediate object of His bounty and love. They were restored, in order that they, the first objects of God’s mercies, might win others to God; not Edom only, “but all nations, upon whom,” God says, “My Name is called.” Plainly then, it is no temporal subjugation, nor any earthly kingdom. The words, “upon whom the name is called,” involve, in any case, belonging to, and being owned by, him whose name is called upon them. It is said of the wife bearing the name of the husband and becoming his, “let thy name be called upon us” (<200> Isaiah 4:1). When Jacob especially adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his he says,

“let my name be named upon them, and the name of My fathers, Abraham and Isaac” (<048> Genesis 48:16).

In relation to God, the words are used of persons and of places especially appropriated to God; as the whole Jewish Church and people, His Temple (~~1088~~ 1 Kings 8:43; ~~2470~~ Jeremiah 7:10,11,14,30; 34:15), His prophets (~~2456~~ Jeremiah 15:16), the city of Jerusalem (~~2708~~ Daniel 9:18,19) by virtue of the temple built there. Contrariwise, Isaiah pleads to God, that the pagan “were never called by Thy Name” (~~2369~~ Isaiah 63:19). This relation of being “called” by the “Name” of God, was not outward only, nor was it ineffective. Its characteristics were holiness imparted by God to man, and protection by God. Thus Moses, in his blessing on Israel if obedient, says,

“The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn to thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways; and all the people of the earth shall see that the Name of the Lord thy God is called upon thee, and they shall fear thee” (~~680~~ Deuteronomy 28:9,10).

And Jeremiah says to God (loc. cit.), “Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart, for Thy name was called upon me, O Lord God of Hosts.”

Israel then, or the Jewish Church, was to inherit, or take into itself, not Edom only, but all nations, and that, by their belonging to God. Edom, as the brother of Israel and yet his implacable enemy, stands as a symbol of all who were alien from God, over against His people. He says, the “residue of Edom,” because he had foretold the destruction which was first to come upon Edom; and Holy Scripture everywhere speaks of those who should be converted, as a “remnant” only. The Jews themselves are the keepers and witnesses of these words. Was it not foretold? It stands written. Is it not fulfilled? The whole world from this country to China, and from China round again to us, as far as it is Christian, and as, year by year, more are gathered into the fold of Christ, are the inheritance of those who were the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

James quoted these words in the Council of Jerusalem, to show how the words of the prophet were in harmony with what Peter had related, how

“God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name” (~~4154~~ Acts 15:14).

He quotes the words as they stood in the version which was understood by the Gentiles who came from Antioch. In it the words are paraphrased, but the meaning remains the same. The Greek translators took away the

metaphor, in order, probably, to make the meaning more intelligible to Greeks, and paraphrased the Hebrew words, imagining other words, as like as might be to the Hebrew. They render, “that the residue of men may seek, and all the nations upon whom My name is called.” The force of the prophecy lies in these last words, that “the Name of God should be called upon all nations.” James, then, quoted the words as they were familiar to his hearers, not correcting those which did not impair the meaning. The so doing, he shows us incidentally, that even imperfection of translation does not empty the fullness of God’s word. The words, “shall seek the Lord,” although not representing anything expressed here in the original, occur in the corresponding prophecy of Isaiah as to the root of Jesse,

“In that day there shall be a root” (that is, a sucker from the root)
 “of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, and to it shall the Gentiles seek” (^{<23110>}Isaiah 11:10).

It may be, that James purposely uses the plural, “the words of the prophets,” in order to include, together with the prophet Amos, other prophets who had foretold the same thing. The statements, that the Jewish Church should inherit the Gentiles, that the Name of God should be called upon the Gentiles, and that the Gentiles should seek the Lord, are parts of one whole; that they should be called, that they should obey the call, and, obeying, be enrolled in the one family of God.

^{<3093>}**Amos 9:13.** *Behold the days are coming* The Day of the Lord is ever coming on: every act, good or bad, is drawing it on: everything which fills up the measure of iniquity or which “hastens the accomplishment of the number of the elect;” all time hastens it by. “The plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed.” The image is taken from God’s promise in the law;

“Your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time” (^{<3365>}Leviticus 26:5);

which is the order of agriculture. The harvest should be so copious that it should not be threshed out until the vintage: the vintage so large, that, instead of ending, as usual, in the middle of the 7th month, it should continue on to the seed-time in November. Amos appears purposely to have altered this. He describes what is wholly beyond nature, in order that it might the more appear that he was speaking of no mere gifts of nature, but, under natural emblems, of the abundance of gifts of grace. “The

plowman,” who breaks up the fallow ground, “shall overtake,” or “throng, the reaper. The “plowman” might “throng,” or “join on to the reaper,” either following upon him, or being followed by him; either preparing the soil for the harvest which the reaper gathers in, or breaking it up anew for fresh harvest after the in-gathering. But the vintage falls between the harvest and the seed-time. If then by the “plowmen thronging on the reaper,” we understand that the harvest should, for its abundance, not be over before the fresh seed-time, then, since the vintage is much nearer to the seed-time than the harvest had been, the words, “he that treadeth out the grapes, him that soweth the seed,” would only say the same less forcibly. In the other way, it is one continuous whole. So vast would be the soil to be cultivated, so beyond all the powers of the cultivator, and yet so rapid and unceasing the growth, that seed-time and harvest would be but one. So our Lord says,

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?
Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields,
for they are white already to harvest” (~~4065~~ John 4:35).

“Four months” ordinarily intervened between seed-time and harvest. Among these Samaritans, seed-time and harvest were one. They had not, like the Jews, had teachers from God; yet, as soon as our Lord taught them, they believed. But, as seed time and harvest should be one, so should the vintage be continuous with the following seed-time. “The treader of grapes,” the last crowning act of the year of cultivation, should join on to “him that soweth” (literally, “draweth” forth, soweth broadcast, scattereth far and wide the) “seed.” All this is beyond nature, and so, the more in harmony with what went before, the establishment of a kingdom of grace, in which “the pagan” should have “the Name of God called upon” them. He had foretold to them, how God would

“send famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (~~3081~~ Amos 8:11).

Now, under the same image, he declares the repeal of that sentence. He foretells, not the fullness only of God’s gifts, but their unbroken continuance. Jerome: “All shall succeed one another, so that no day should be void of grain, wine, and gladness.” And they shall not follow only on one another, but shall all go on together in one perpetual round of toil and fruitfulness. There shall be one unceasing inpouring of riches; no break in the heavenly husbandry; labor shall at once yield fruit; the harvest shall but

encourage fresh labor. The end shall come swiftly on the beginning; the end shall not close the past only, but issue forth anew. Such is the character of the toils of the Gospel. All the works of grace go on in harmony together; each helps on the other; in one, the fallow-ground of the heart is broken up; in another, seed is sown, the beginning of a holy conversation; in another, is the full richness of the ripened fruit, in advanced holiness or the blood of martyrs. And so, also, of the ministers of Christ, some are adapted especially to one office, some to another; yet all together carry on His one work. All, too, patriarchs, prophets, Apostles, shall meet together in one; they who, before Christ's coming (NOTE: Rup.), "sowed the seed, the promises of the Blessed Seed to come," and they who "entered into their labors," not to displace, but to complete them; all shall rejoice together in that Seed which is Christ.

And the mountains shall drop sweet wine and all the hills shall melt Amos takes the words of Joel, in order to identify their prophecies, yet strengthens the image. For instead of saying, "the hills shall flow with milk," he says, "they shall melt, dissolve themselves. Such shall be the abundance and super-abundance of blessing, that it shall be as though the hills dissolved themselves in the rich streams which they poured down. The mountains and hills may be symbols, in regard either to their height, or their natural barrenness or their difficulty of cultivation. In past times they were scenes of idolatry. In the time of the Gospel, all should be changed; all should be above nature. All should be obedient to God: all, full of the graces and gifts of God. What was exalted, like the Apostles should be exalted not for itself, but in order to pour out the streams of life-giving doctrine and truth, which would refresh and gladden the faithful. And the lesser heights, "the hills," should, in their degree, pour out the same streams. Everything, heretofore barren and unfruitful, should overflow with spiritual blessing. The mountains and hills of Judaea, with their terraced sides clad with the vine were a natural symbol fruitfulness to the Jews, but they themselves could not think that natural fruitfulness was meant under this imagery. It would have been a hyperbole as to things of nature; but what, in natural things, is a hyperbole, is but a faint shadow of the joys and rich delights and glad fruitfulness of grace.

Amos 9:14. *And I will bring again the captivity of My people* Where all around is spiritual, there is no reason to take this alone as earthly. An earthly restoration to Canaan had no value, except as introductory to the spiritual. The two tribes were, in a great measure, restored to their own

land, when Zachariah, being “filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied,” as then about to accomplished, that

“God hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation to us in the house of His servant David, as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets — that we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him” (~~4068~~ Luke 1:68-70,74,75).

So our Lord said;

“ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (~~4882~~ John 8:32,34,36).

And Paul,

“The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (~~4882~~ Romans 8:2).

And they shall build the waste (Rather “shall build waste”) (There is no article) “cities.” “As they who are freed from captivity and are no longer in fear of the enemy, “build cities and plant vineyards” and gardens,” so shall these unto God. “This,” says one of old (Rup.), “needs no exposition, since, throughout the world, amid the desert of pagandom, which was before deserted by God, Churches of Christ have arisen, which, for the firmness of faith may be called “cities,” and, for the gladness of “hope which maketh not ashamed, vineyards,” and for the sweetness of charity, gardens; wherein they dwell, who have builded them through the word; whence they drink the wine of gladness, who formed them by precepts; whence they eat fruits, who advanced them by counsels, because, as “he who reapeth,” so he too who “buildeth” such “cities,” and he who “planteth” such “vineyards,” and he who “maketh” such “gardens, receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal” (~~4065~~ John 4:36).

~~4065~~ **Amos 9:15.** *And I will plant them upon their own land* The promises and threatenings of God are, to individuals, conditional upon their continuing to be of that character, to which God annexes those promises or threats. Theodoret: “The God of all often promises, when those who receive the promises, by joying in iniquity hinder those promises from taking effect. At times also he threatens heavy things, and they who for

their offences were the objects of those threats, being, through fear of them, converted, do not in act experience them.” The two tribes received some little shadow of fulfillment of these promises on the return from Babylon. “They were planted in their own land.” The non-fulfillment of the rest, as well as the evident symbolic character of part of it, must have shown them that such fulfillment was the beginning, not the end. Their land was “the Lord’s land;” banishment from it was banishment from the special presence of God, from the place where He manifested Himself, where alone the typical sacrifices, the appointed means of reconciliation, could be offered. Restoration to their own land was the outward symbol of restoration to God’s favor, of which it was the fruit. it was a condition of the fulfillment of those other promises, the coming of Him in whom the promises were laid up, the Christ. He was not simply to be of David’s seed, according to the flesh. Prophecy, as time went on, declared His birth at Bethlehem, His revelation in Galilee, His coming to His Temple, His sending forth His law from Jerusalem. Without some restoration to their own land, these things could not be. Israel was restored in the flesh, that, after the flesh, the Christ might be born of them, where God foretold that He should be born. But the temporal fulfillment ended with that event in time in which they were to issue, for whose sake they were; His coming. They were but the vestibule to the spiritual. As shadows, they ceased when the Sun arose. As means, they ended, when the end, whereto they served, came. There was no need of a temporal Zion, when He who was to send forth His law thence, had come and sent it forth. No need of a temple when He who was to be its glory, had come, illumined it, and was gone. No need of one of royal birth in Bethlehem, when “the Virgin” had “conceived and borne a Son,” and “God” had been “with us.” And so as to other prophecies. All which were bound to the land of Judah, were accomplished. As the true Israel expanded and embraced all nations, the whole earth became “the land” of God’s people. Palestine had had its prerogatives, because God manifested Himself there, was worshiped there. When God’s people was enlarged, so as “to inherit the pagan,” and God was worshiped everywhere, His land too was everywhere. His promises accompanied His people, and these were in all lands. His words then, “I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them,” expanded with their expansion. It is a promise of perpetuity, like that of our Lord; “Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world. The gates of hell shall not prevail against” the Church, the people of God. The world may gnash its teeth;

kings may oppress; persecutors may harass; popular rage may trample on her; philosophy may scoff at her; unbelief may deny the promises made to her; the powers of darkness may rage around her; her own children may turn against her. In vain! Jerome: "She may be shaken by persecutions, she cannot be uprooted; she may be tempted, she cannot be overcome. For the Lord God Almighty, the Lord her God, hath promised that He will do it, whose promise is the law to nature."

Saith the Lord thy God Rib.: "O Israel of God, O Catholic Church, to be gathered out of Jews and Gentiles, doubt not, he would say, thy promised happiness. For thy God who loveth thee and who from eternity hath chosen thee, hath commanded me to say this to thee in His Name." Rup.: "He turneth too to the ear of each of us, giving us joy, in His word, 'saith the Lord thy God.'" "They too who are plants which God hath planted, and who have so profited, that through them many daily profit, "shall be planted upon their own ground," that is, each, in his order and in that kind of life which he has chosen, shall strike deep roots in true piety, and they shall be so preserved by God, that by no force of temptations shall they be uprooted, but each shall say with the holy prophet,

"I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the
mercy of God forever and ever" (~~451B~~ Psalm 52:9).

Not that every tree, planted in the ground of the Church militant, is so firm that it cannot be plucked up, but many there are, which are not plucked up, being protected by the Hand of Almighty God. O blessed that land, where no tree is plucked up, none is injured by any worm, or decays through any age. How many great, fruit-bearing, trees do we see plucked up in this land of calamity and misery! Blessed day, when we shall be there, where we need fear no storm!" Yet this too abideth true; "none shall be plucked up." Without our own will, neither passions within, nor temptations without, nor the malice or wiles of Satan, can "pluck" us "up." None can "be plucked up," who doth not himself loose his hold, whose root is twisted round the Rock, which is Thou, O Blessed Jesus. For Thou hast said,

"they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My
Hand" (~~410B~~ John 10:28).

FOOTNOTES

- ^{ft119} κνιζων , Septuagint; vellicans, Jerome. See Theophr. iv. 2. Dioscor. L. i. Pliny xiii. 7. in Bochart ii. 39. p. 384. The Hebrew word **sl 1B**,^{<h1103>} (from **sl 1B**,^{<h1103>} “a fig” or sycamore in Arabic and Aethiopic signifies only “employed about figs” or sycamores
- ^{ft120} See Arabic authorities in Bochart L. ii. c. 34. pp. 442, 3. and Freytag Lexicon
- ^{ft121} in Eusebius and Jerome, ad. loc., found also in Rashi, Aben Ezra, Abarbenel
- ^{ft122} **τυμπανισας** ^{<5178>}, Auct. de vit. Proph. ap. Epiph. ii. 145) which occurs in ^{<8135>} Hebrews 11:35
- ^{ft123} **qrzjh** ^{h4219>} is only used of such a bowl; and its meaning “a vessel for sprinkling,” agrees herewith. Its employment by the rich, when it had once been desecrated to idolatry, is nothing strange far less, than the use of chalices to adorn the side-boards of rich English nobles, when the church-plate had been plundered in England or Spain
- ^{ft124} ~~<008>~~ Genesis 5:8. The above instances are selected from Hengstenberg, Auth. d. Pent. i. 83-104
- ^{ft125} Such are, the use of the words of ^{<3024>} Amos 2:14 in ^{<2416>} Jeremiah 46:6; the use of the idiom of Amos, “I take up a lamentation” (^{<3101>} Amos 5:1), three times by Ezekiel, ^{<2670>} Ezekiel 27:2; 28:12; 32:2; the use of the

image, “a brand plucked out of the burning,” ^{<3041>}Amos 4:11;
^{<3882>}Zechariah 3:2

- ^{ft126} A recent writer “on the interpretation of Scripture” (Essays and Reviews, p. 343) ventures to give this (^{<3070>}Amos 7:10-17) as one of three instances in proof that “the failure of prophecy is never admitted in spite of Scripture and of history.” Certainly, no Christian thinks that God’s Word can fail. However, unless the execution of God’s sentence on one of the many calf-priests of Bethel is necessarily a matter of history, it has rather to be shown why it should be mentioned, than why it was omitted
- ^{ft127} The mention Of the head of Carmel marks out. that the Mount Carmel is meant (see ^{<3093>}Amos 9:3; ^{<1182>}1 Kings 18:42) not the town Carmel (now Kurmul) in the south of Judah. lying around the head and sides of a valley of some width and depth. The whole plain around it is high, and it seems probable that a district was called by its name (^{<0252>}1 Samuel 25:2,7; ^{<4260>}2 Chronicles 26:10), but the hill of Main is only 200 feet above the plain. Robinson, i. 433
- ^{ft128} G. Williams. Ibn. Haukal says, “the river of Damascus rises under a Christian church, called al-Fijat. It unites with the river, called Barada.” in Abulf. Tab. Syr. p. 15. The Fijeh is “pure, sweet and limpid” (Robinson, ii. 476); the Barada is undrinkable, producing goitre. (G. Will. in Smith Geogr. Diet. v. Damascus)
- ^{ft129} Unsteady and in part headlong motion is the central meaning of the Arabic “pharphara;” “parting asunder, and so flight,” of the Arabic “pharr.” On the bursting forth of the Fijeh, see Porter, Five Years, i. 260)
- ^{ft130} “Nothing can be conceived more dreary than the ravines near Damascus, except when streams flow through them, which are always fringed with green.” Lord Lindsay, holy land, p. 330. See Porter, Five years, i. 324. 280
- ^{ft131} “Every stream that descended from the hills (in the upper valley of the Barada
- ^{ft132} in R. Pethakiah in Journ. As. 1831. viii. 388, and Ibn Batuta in Ritter, xvii. 1346; with much more
- ^{ft133} Aram Naharaim. Aram Beth Rehob, Aram Maachah, Padan Aram, Hamath, Tadmor, Tiphсах, etc. The Arabic form of the name Mabug (Hierapolis), Manbej, is probably the original; so that Hitzig is wrong

as to the three which he assumed to be proofs of a non-Semitic origin of the cities on this line of traffic (quoted by Ritter, xvii. 1337)

^{ft134} Etymologically, it would mean “cleft.” It does mean a valley, as contrasted with hills, ~~(887)~~ Deuteronomy 8:7; 11:11; ~~(340)~~ Isaiah 40:4; 41:18; 63:14; ~~(302)~~ Ezekiel 3:22,23. It is used of the “valley of the Chebar,” in contrast with the hill of Tel-Abib. As united with proper names, it answers to our “vale,” a broad valley between hills; as “the vale of Megiddo,” “of Jericho,” “of Mizpeh,” “under Hermen” (Josephus, xi. 8, 3), probably the upper part of the valley of the Jordan above the lake Merom (v. 7), along the course of the River Hasbany; the “vale of Lebanon” being probably the southern part of the great Bik’ah, where Baal-gad lay under Hermon (Ibid. xi. 17), and east of Lebanon (Ibid. xiii. 5). So also probably the “vale of Dura” (~~(200)~~ Daniel 3:1). A long valley, though broad, if seen from a height, looks like a cleft. In Arabic, the original force of the root is altogether lost. In norms, we have, in different forms, the varying meanings assigned, beka, “a plateau;” bak’a, “low ground, where water stagnates;” baki’a, “a plain.” See the Freytag Lexicon. Burekhardt mentions “a broad valley called El Bekka (Bek’a) north and northeast of Safout (near Amman) at the foot of the mountain on which it stands.” Syria, 362

^{ft135} The older eastern names often re-appear, when the Greek names, which their conquerors gave, passed away with themselves. This is not a revival of the old name, but a continuance of it. During the reign of their conquerors, we hear from them the names which they gave. When they are gone, we hear from the Easterns the old Eastern name which lived on among them. The name Baalbek re-appears in the 10th century A.D. in Muslim writers (Robinson, iii. 524), but in none but pagan times would a pagan name have been given to it

^{ft136} Porter, 452. Stonehenge is said to be built so that the first rays of the sun on the longest day fell through the entrance on the altar

^{ft137} Eusebius, Onomasticon, v. [Ἀερμων](#). “It is said that on its summit there is a celebrated temple, which is the object of reverence to the pagan toward Paneas and Libanus.” Jerome. Hilary also mentions the reverence to Hermon, (or, as he says, worship of it,) up to his day, in Psalm 133. Reland, 323

- ft138 Ibid. and p. 451. “At Kula’t Bustra, 1000 feet above” the road, “is a groupe of ruined temples, simple in form, and rude in style.” Add Robinson, iii. 414,5
- ft139 It has been conjectured, that, with the worship of the sun, the Egyptian name for Heliopolis, On, (Light) may have been brought from Egypt, and that, as Ezekiel calls the Heliopolis of Egypt, Aven, vanity, for “On” (<307>Ezekiel 30:17), and Hosea calls “Bethel.” “Bethaven” (<304>Amos 4:15; 10:5), so Amos “may” have called this “the valley of vanity” “for the valley of On.” But this is mere conjecture. There is no trace of the name “On” in the whole tract. Baalbek must have been an ancient name
- ft140 Ritter, Erdk. xvii. 650. from Roth, Reise in v. Schubert, iii. 306. I. and M. Ibid. “It seemed as though the spring never left this country.” De la Roque
- ft141 xxi. 10, in Gesta Dei per Francos, pp. 1002,1003. He calls it Bedegene
- ft142 A monument at its site “near the source of the Orontes” (Strabo xvi. 2. 19) has hunting-scenes on its four sides. G. Williams, in Smith’s Geogr. Diet. v. Orontes
- ft143 “A more dreary and barren situation could scarcely be imagined. There is no stream or fountain within miles of it, and the inhabitants were wholly dependent upon wells and cisterns for supply of water.” Porter, Handbook, p. 577
- ft144 The subdual of Armenia by Esarhaddon is mentioned in the cuneiform inscription, Rawlinson, Herodotus, i. 481
- ft145 Xenophon, Anabasis iv. 5. Armenia is probably i. q. yNimi^{h4508}, “mountain of Minui” (i. q. Minyas) a name of one portion of Armenia (<2512>Jeremiah 51:27). Aram has only the “m” in common with Minni.
- ft146 The theory that Aram means “highland,” Canaan “lowland”:
- (1) ignores that, in the Bible, they are the names of people, not of lands.
 - (2) It is contrary to the facts, as they appear in Holy Scripture. The borders of Canaan extended from Zidon southward to Gaza, and thence to the south of the Dead Sea (<0109>Genesis 10:19) and, according to their own coins, included Laodicea ad Libamum (Ges. Thes. s. v.). Damascus (2,400 feet above the sea), the highest place in Aram, was lower than Jerusalem (2,610 feet) or Bethlehem (2,704 feet) or Ramah (2,800 feet) or Hebron (3,029 feet) (See V. de Velde Memoir, p. 176-80), and

the common names of Aram, “plain of Aram,” “field of Aram,” (Padan Aram, Sedeh Aram,) “Aram between the two rivers,” (Aram Naharaim) all agree in describing a flat country. Aram Naharaim or Mesopotamia is only about 435 English feet above the sea (408 Fr. feet, Ritter viii. 16) that is 1/6 of the height of Jerusalem. Heights are spoken of once in connection with Aram (from Aram, from the mountains of the east, ^{-0237>}Numbers 23:7) and Mesopotamia is bounded on the north by Matthew Masius, but it is itself a plain.

- (3) The root from which the word Canaan is derived has in no case the sense of physical depression. Its very varied Arabic meanings center in that of “contracted;” thence “bowed,” bowed toward, “that is, was submissive,” “was bent upon a thing.” In Hebrew it is used of wares “compressed,” “packed together;” of bowing down an enemy, or oneself in submission.
- (4) For the real lowland of Canaan, that near the coast (from Joppa to Gaza) there is specific term, **hl pwl**^{-18219>}, “the low,” which occurs in the first. detailed descriptions of Canaan in Joshua, is the received Hebrew word, thence passed into Greek, ἡ Σεφηλα, 1 Macc. 12:38, of which Eusebius says “and it is yet called Sephela. This is the whole low country, north and west around Elcutheropolis” (Onomasticon. See Reland, p. 307, and p. 372) from where the Carthaginians carried it to Spain, (Seville) with many other names (See Movers, Phoenic. iii. 640, 1). It is used also of that same part of Palestine by Arabic authors.

The idea then that Canaan is used for lowland, as contrasted with Aram, highland, is contrary to the fact (in that Aram mostly was low. Canaan, high), contrary to the meaning of the word (which is never used in this sense, for which another word is employed), contrary to the simple sense of Scripture, where the names are originally those of the fathers of the races who lived in those countries

^{ft147} Brugsch, Hist. de l’ Eg. c. 8. p. 153) to be a blending of those of two monarchs of the xix. Dynasty, Sethos I and Raamses II, interwoven with those of Ousartesen III (Dynasty xii.) and Tothmosis III (Dyn. xviii

^{ft148} See Ibid. p. 35, 51, 2, 68, 9. The first mention which we have as yet of numerous captives is in the victory in Mesopotamia by Tothmosis I (Ibid. 90)

- ft149 So also the Egyptian inscriptions, in remarkable conformity with the account given by the priests to Germanicus, “There were read also the tributes imposed on the nations, the weight of silver and gold, the number of arms and horses, and gifts to the temples, ivory and incense, and what quantity of grain and all utensils each nation paid, on a scale not less magnificent than is now prescribed by the violence of the Parthians or the power of the Romans.” Tac. Ann. ii. 60
- ft150 ^{<0760>}Judges 16:4. Its situation was marked in Jerome’s time, by a” village” named from it” Capharsorech,” village of Sorech, “north of Eleutheropolis near Saran (Zorah. ^{<0732>}Judges 13:2) whence Samson was.” de loc. Hebr.
- ft151 Ashkelon, at the head of Wadi Simsim which joins on to the Wady el Hasy and drains all the country round Belt Jibrin and Tel-es-safieh (Robinson, ii. 48, 9) which reaches on beyond Ajjar (Ritt. xvi. 68) near Yarmuth. Ashdod, at the head of the valley called from it, meeting the valley of Ashklon at Beit Jibrin (Ritt. 91). Ekron near the Wady-es-Surrar, the trunk of the system of valleys in north Philistia, reaching on into the mountains of Judah, and reunifying greatly (Ritt. 102,3).
- ft152 namely, Blanche Garde, Tel-es-Safieh (Robinson, ii. 31, 32). South of this, Beit-Jibrin (Eleutheropolis) on the road from Gaza; (Robinson, ii. 28, 9. This was fortified by the Turks probably, restrain Bedouin incursions, as late as 1551 A.D. Robinson, Ibid. 25) Castellum Arnaldi at Belt Nube on the Ramleh road to Jerusalem, (Ritter, xvi. 92, 3) and Ibelin (Jamnia, or Yebna) on the north. (Robinson, Ibid. 66, note 5)
- ft153 Vit. Porph. Gaz. c. 9 (in Act. Sanct. v. 655) Rel. p. 793. See also Jerome in Isaiah 17. Ep. ad Laet.
- ft154 as, “the remnant of Judah,” ^{<2405>}Jeremiah 40:15; 42:15; 44:28; “the remnant of Jerusalem,” ^{<2408>}Jeremiah 24:8; “the remnant of Israel,” ^{<2448>}Isaiah 46:3; ^{<2409>}Jeremiah 6:9; 31:7. ^{<1508>}Ezra 9:8; ^{<3122>}Micah 2:12; “of Jacob,” ^{<3169>}Micah 5:6,7,(7,8 Eng.); “the remnant of the house of Judah,” ^{<3107>}Zephaniah 2:7; “the remnant of Mine inheritance,” ^{<1214>}2 Kings 21:14; “of My flock,” ^{<2278>}Jeremiah 23:3 “the remnant which is left,” ^{<2370>}Isaiah 37:4; “go forth a remnant,” ^{<2372>}Isaiah 37:32; “of Moab,” ^{<2319>}Isaiah 15:9; “of Philistia,” ^{<2348>}Isaiah 14:30; and in Amos himself, “the remnant of Joseph,” ^{<3165>}Amos 5:15; “the remnant of Edom,” ^{<1092>}Amos 9:12)

^{ft155} Strabo xii. 3, 4. “This too is said, that the Milesinns who first founded Heraclea constrained the Mariandyni, who possessed it before, to act as serfs, and to be liable even to be sold by them, “but not beyond their borders (for they covenanted as to this),” in likeway as the so-called Minoan-union became serfs to the Cretans, and the Penestae to the Thessalians.” quoted by Movers, Phoen. ii. 1. pp. 313, 4, who so interprets Amos

^{ft156} (1) “Bezer in the wilderness” or “plain” in Reuben opposite to Jericho, one of the cities of refuge (~~404B~~ Deuteronomy 4:43; ~~611B~~ Joshua 20:8).

(2) Bosor, a “strong and great city” of Gilead (1 Macc. 5:26,36. Ant. xii. 8. 4).

(3) Besara, on the confines of Ptolemais 2 1/2 miles from Geba (Josephus, Vit. Section 24).

(4) Bozrah of Moab, (~~248B~~ Jeremiah 48:24).

The Bostra which the Romans rebuilt, 24 miles from Edrei, which became the Metropolis of Arabia, and, in Arabic times of Hauran, (see the description of the remains, Porter, Five Years, ii. 140ff) lay too far north to be any of these.

^{ft157} ~~0023~~ Numbers 21:23-30. Of this Moab had the part. from the Arnon to the north of the Dead Sea, including “the plains of Moab” that is, the part of the valley of the Jordan on the east side, opposite to Jericho, the subsequent possession of Reuben. Gilead, to the south and east of the Jabbok, had belonged to Ammon, from where it is said that Moses gave to the 2 1/2 tribes the land “unto the border of the children of Ammon” (~~0630~~ Joshua 13:10) that is, westward and yet “half the land of the children of Ammon” (~~0635~~ Joshua 13:25), that is, what they had lost to the Amorites

^{ft158} ~~0713~~ Judges 11:33. “He smote them from Aroer to Minnith,” (Minnithwas “4 miles from Heshbon on the way to Philadelphia,” that is, Rabbah) twenty cities and unto Abel-keramim “7 (Eusebius, 6) miles from Rabbah.” Jerome, If Aroer is here the best known, that by the account describes one line from the a little beyond Heshbon and then to a place near the Jabbok.

^{ft159} 6 miles from Pella on a hill toward Gerasa” (Jerash). Jerome, de loc. Hebr. Both places were beyond the Jabbok. The name Jabesh, “dry,” still survives in the valley Yabes, (the Arabic pronunciation) which,

with its brook, ends in the Jordan 7 or 8 geographic miles north of the Jabbok

- ^{ft160} On Ammon see below. When Isaiah prophesied, Moab was in possession of all the cities of Reuben, Isaiah 15; 16) after the 2 1/2 tribes has been carried away by Tiglath-pileser. Both united in insulting Judah, and (as it appears from Ezekiel (~~350~~Ezekiel 25:2-8)
- ^{ft161} Solomon's worship of Ashtoreth as well as of Milcom is mentioned ~~1100~~1 Kings 11:5. The high places of Chemosh and Molech are alone mentioned there, ~~1100~~1 Kings 11:7; that of Ashtoreth is mentioned in the account of its defilement by Josiah
- ^{ft162} Abulfeda (who, at Hamath, must have known it, as lying on the pilgrim-road to Mecca) Tab. Syr. p. 91
- ^{ft163} ~~350~~Ezekiel 25:5. See Lord Lindsay. 278-82. Porter, Handbook, 304, 5. Lord C. Hamilton's Journal in Keith on Prophecy, pp. 270,271
- ^{ft164} Keith, c. 6. end 274. Of the 30 in Dr. Smith's list (Robinson App. iii. 168. ed. i.) several are clearly west of Ammon, in Gilead, several are not in the maps; some are clearly in Ammonitis
- ^{ft165} Eusebius, Onomasticon. Our copies of Jerome have by mistake, east. "6 hours" Porter, 307. See 309. and Ritter, xv. 1136-8) that is, Amman
- ^{ft166} ~~340~~Jeremiah 49:3. Jerome here renders Chemosh, and so did the Greek copies which Theodoret used. Aquila, Symmachus, and Syriac
- ^{ft167} Josephus understands it of the King of Moab's own son; but then he misses the force of every expression. He supposes that the king of Moab tried to cut his way to escape only, and explains the great indignation against Israel, of the compassion of Israel himself (Ant. ix. 3,2). Theodoret supposes that the Moabites took the king of Edom (that is, the heir apparent) prisoner, and so sacrificed him
- ^{ft168} Besides the following, there is a Kuryetein about halfway between Damascus and Palmyra (see Five Years, i. 252ff, ii. 358) and a Kureiyeh "in a broad valley at the southwest base of the Jebel Hauran," near the Roman Bostra with "remains of remote antiquity." Ibid. ii. 191. 8. add Burckhardt, Syria, 103, 4
- ^{ft169} Kiriathaim was according to Jerome in his time "a Christian village called Coraiatha, 10 miles west of Medaba, near Baare" (perhaps the valley so called, near Machaerus, Josephus, B. J. vii. 6.3. Ritter, xv. 582). Of Kerioth he only says, "in the country of Moab, as Jeremiah

writes.” The present Korriath lies under the Jebel Attarus. southwest of Medeba, by the streamlet el Wal. Ritter, *Ibid.* and map in Robinson

ft170 In ^{<1859>}Leviticus 25:39; ^{<6152>}Deuteronomy 15:12, should be rendered, according to the first sense of the conjugation, sell himself, not, be sold

ft171 It is the more generic name, like our “clothes,” except that it is chiefly used of large raiment and even of the outside covering, in which the ark, the table of showbread, etc. were covered in the journeys in the wilderness (English Version cloth) ^{<0406>}Numbers 4:6,11,13; and of the bed-coverings of the great. ^{<0913>}1 Samuel 19:13; ^{<1001>}1 Kings 1:1. It is used also of state robes, ^{<1220>}1 Kings 22:10; ^{<4489>}2 Chronicles 18:9

ft172 Jarmath, 10 miles north of Eleutheropolis (Beth Jabrin); Eglon, 10 miles west; and Lachish, 7 miles Eusebius, Jerome

ft173 See ^{<1042>}1 Kings 4:12. Eusebius. Jerome say, “it is now a village, in the valley of the Jordan, 10 miles south of Seythopois (Bethshean) and is now called Bethmaela (our copies of Jerome have Bethaula). There is also (a little village, Jerome). Abelmea, on the way from Neapoils (Nablus) to Seythopolis”

ft174 Coffee, though invented for vigils, was adopted as a compensation for Muhammed’s prohibition of wine. See the history in de Sacy, *Chrest. Arabic* T. i. p. 412. ed. 2

ft175 ^{<1008>}2 Kings 1:8. The mention of the girdle shows that the “hair” was the “garment of hair” (^{<3834>}Zechariah 13:4; ^{<5815>}Hebrews 11:37), not the Nazarite’s hair

ft176 ^{<2005>}2 Kings 10:15,16,23. Jehonadah beforehand, was present to observe if there were any worshipers of God in Baal’s temple his influence was not with the Baal-worshipers but with the vacillating people

ft177 Hence, in the idiom “shall slay their young men with the sword,” etc. ^{<0882>}2 Kings 8:12; ^{<2412>}Jeremiah 11:22; 15:8; 18:21, etc. ^{<5017>}Ezekiel 30:17; and in the remaining place in ^{<3040>}Amos 4:10

ft178 See on Tertullian, *de spect.* 1. p. 189. u. f. Oxford Translation

ft179 The English margin gives as a choice, the rendering, “I will press your place, an a cart frill of sheaves presseth.” But:

(1) **tj 1T1** ^{<18478>} never occurs as the first object of a verb. In ^{<1851>}Job 36:20; 40:12; it stands absolutely, as with the intransitive verb (^{<3807>}Habakkuk 3:7).

(2) Nor in the object pressed down omitted, as if “press down under you,” could stand for “press you down.”

(3) Nor in the slight track made by a two-wheeled cart (such as is used in the east and in many mountainous countries) likely to be an image of the utter crushing of a people,

ft180 Even the route from Beisan (Bethshean) and Zerim (Jezreel) to Ramleh and Egypt lay north of Samaria, passing through the valley of Yabud to Ferasin and Zeita. (Robinson, iii. 122-4)

ft181 Maundrell “passed through narrow valleys for four hours,” before he reached Caphar Arab taking the road to the left of Arab (Arrabeh) and Imlah and “over Selee.” pp. 77,8. “The way from Sanur to Jenin ran uniformly through a narrow wadi (“a sort of defile,” Wilson, lands, etc. ii. 84), opening into the plain of Esdraelon,” (V. de Velde i. 367. Robinson, ii. 314)

ft182 Porter, Handbook, 350. “Almost all travelers are compelled to draw conclusions from the well-known descent from Sebaste through Sanur to Jenin. But the general nature of the ground cannot be doubted.” Stanley, Palestine, 246

ft183 As in ~~3850~~ Job 35:9; ~~2001~~ Ecclesiastes 4:1. The word, like our “oppressions,” is a passive, made active by its use as an abstract

ft184 The Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Syriac, Chaldee, and Jerome retain “Damascus” as a proper name. Of late, it has become a fashion to render it, “and in the damask of a couch.” But:

(1) the fact that Ezekiel (~~3578~~ Ezekiel 27:18) speaks of “wine” and “white wool,” (the raw material) as the exports of Damascus to Tyre, seems a decisive proof, that the manufactures, for which Damascus has in modern times been so celebrated, did not exist there then.

(2) It does not appear that the manufacture, which in modern European language is called from the city, “damask” or the like, is so called in Arabic. There has been a two-fold error in comparing an Arabic word.

(a) The word which, though foreign, had been naturalized in Arabia before Muhammed, was “Dimakso.” This occurs in old poets (Amrulkeis v. 10, Ham. pp. 265,6, 556) Scholiasts or Lexica mention corruptions of this; “midakso,” “dikamso” “dimkaso,” but no trace of these has yet been observed in the actual language. The alleged forms, Dimssako, Dimssako, Dimasko, (which alone would have

corresponded with the Hebrew word) have no existence, except in error. See Freyt. Lex. Arabic ii. 57. The word “dimakso” is probably, from its different forms, a corrupted and foreign word. But the corruption has no near relation to the name of the city, Dimashko. It would have been strange that Arabs, speaking the same, and Hebrews, a kindred dialect, should have corrupted the name, as Europeans have not. Nor does any native Scholiast connect Dimakso with the city Damascus.

(b) The meaning of this word “Dimakso,” was not “manufactured,” but “raw silk.” Freyt. from Kam. Dj. It is silk “thread,” which can be “twisted,” Amrulk. “raw white silk or what is like it in whiteness and softness.” Abulala in Tebriz. Scholl. ad. Ham. p. 566. The garment made of it was called, in the passive participle, “modamkaso” that is, made of “dimakso.” See DeRossi.

ft185 As in ^{<8889>}Deuteronomy 8:19, “I testify against you this day that ye shall utterly perish;” ^{<8807>}Psalms 50:7, “hear, O Israel, and I will testify against thee; I am God, thy God.” Compare ^{<8808>}Psalms 81:8. “I will testify unto thee”)

ft186 In Arabic “a soft smooth soil.” On the richness of the Ard-el-Bathanyeh, see Five Years, ii. 52,7,8,60,71,82,146,9; on Jaulan, Port. Handbook, 461, 4

ft187 : “Hear ye, your Lord, upon you, they shall take you,” are masculine; “that oppress, that crush, that say, your posterity, ye shall go out, each before her, and ye shall be cast forth,” feminine

ft188 “way” with the gen. is either act. “the way of a man” that is, his way of acting, dealing, etc. or pass. “the way in which he is dealt with or it fares with him,” as in ^{<2904>}Isaiah 10:24. ^{<0135>}Genesis 31:35

ft189 “A violent plague used formerly to occur about once in 10 or 12 years. It was always less frequent at Cairo than at Alexandria.” Sir G. Wilk., Handbook, Eg. p. 7

ft190 See authorities in Ritter, Erdk. xvi. 731; xvii. 37, 119, 225, 249, 334-6, 365, 437, 599, 600. 7, 836, 925, 1034, 1155-7, 64, 74, 5, 83.8, 1206, 1504, 1654. 68, 1711. 35, 44, 52.6. The terrible earthquake of 1837 which reached the interior of Paestine from Tyre to Bethlehem and Hebron, and northward to Beirut, Cyprus and Damascus (auth. in Ritter, xv. 254, 305; xvi. 210. 28, 647; xvii. 334. 5, 365, 406) was, from its extent, exceptional. 250,000 perished at Antioch in one

earthquake which destroyed Beirut, Biblos with all its inhabitants. and Sidon in part. Ritt. xvii. 437. 8

^{ft191} The Hauran, besides being basaltic, has on the east a very remarkable volcanic country, occupying 2 degrees of latitude (32-34) and 1 1/3 longitude, “surpassed perhaps in extent, but scarcely in intensity by any like formation in the world.” See Wetzstein, (its discoverer) *Reisebericht des Hauran*, p. 6-20, and woodcuts of extinct volcanoes

^{ft192} Baronius, Pagi, Fleuri, Tillemont, the Univ. Hist. (Mod.) only mention the following earthquakes as afflicting Palestine:

- (1) an earthquake on Julian’s attempt to rebuild the temple, 363 A.D. (from Ruf. H. E. i. 38. 9.)
- (2) a shock only, 394 A.D. (from Jerome, c. Vigil.)
- (3) “strong shocks,” 633 A.D. (from Elmaein p. 19.)
- (4) a severe one “in Palestine and Syria” (locality undefined) 658 A.D., from Theophanes (650 A.D. Theoph. i. 531.)
- (5) “in Palestine round the Jordan and throughout Syria, 746 A.D.” (Bar. i. Pag. ii.) also from Theoph. “many thousands, yea, countless. perished; Churches anti monasteries fell in; and chiefly in the desert of the Holy City” (Theoph. A. 738. i. 651. ed. Class. Paul. Diac. L. xxii. Bibl. Patr. xii. 311.)
- (6) “no slight one,” 756 A.D. (Bar. xv.) from the same (748 A.D. i. 662 Class.)
- (7) a severe earthquake at Ramleh and its vicinity, 1066 A.D. radiating along the coast southward, from Renaud. Hist. Patr. Al. 433. Von Raumer (Palest. 91. ed. 4) quotes Vitriaco, who speaks chiefly of the seacoast, and specifies Tyre (in *Gesta Dei* p. 1097); a shock 1105 A.D., another A. 1114, destructive in Cilicia and Antioch (Ibid. 419, 424, 610) frequent shocks at Nablus, A. 1120 (Ibid. 824). The list of earthquakes given by Von Hoff in his *Chronik der Erdbeben vom. John 3460 vor bis 1759 unserer Zeitrechnung* in his *Gesch. d. Verand. d. Erdoberfl.* (T. iv. 122-430) (as extracted for me) adds, at most, one only affecting Palestine (in common with Syria), 1182 A.D., but does not name the authority. (That of 1353,4, is not related to have affected Palestine.) Cedrenus also only adds one 532-533 A.D., “pervading the whole world and lasting 40 days.” He mentions Arabia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Antioch as suffering by it (i. 674 ed. Bekk.). Abulfaraj

(Hist. Dyn.) adds none. The list in Berryat, Collection Academique T. vi. pp. 488-675, adds one, 650 A.D., “in Syria, Persia, especially in Judaea; but without naming any authority”.

- ft193 There are now seven wells, 2 large and separate from the other 5. But Moses speaks of one well only, dug by Abraham and reopened by Isaac. ^{<02E3>}Genesis 21:30; 26:18,32,3
- ft194 **j n1y**, ^{<h3240>} is used of casting forth, ^{<0499>}Numbers 19:9; casting violently to the ground, ^{<238E>}Isaiah 28:2; casting into a furnace, ^{<h221>}Ezekiel 22:20. Yet ordinarily it has the simple meaning “placed, made to rest”
- ft195 (i. q. Arabic koumah, “heap,”) is rendered **πλειαδα** by Symmachus, Theodotus here; by the Septuagint Aq. and Jerome in ^{<888E>}Job 38:31; by the Septuagint also ^{<889>}Job 9:9 (the two names **αρκτουρον** and **πλειαδα**, being transposed). The Syriac and Chaldean texts retain the Hebrew word, which the Arabic Transl. in Job renders “Thorayya,” “little multitude,” the Arabic name of the Pleiades
- ft196 Aquila and Jerome here, Jerome in ^{<899>}Job 9:9, the Septuagint in ^{<23E0>}Isaiah 13:10 and ^{<888E>}Job 38:31, render, “Orion”
- ft197 The English Version has followed a conjecture of Jonathan and Kimchi, founded on the context of ^{<89E7>}Job 9:27; 10:20. Aquila, **ὁ μειδιων**; and Jerome, “subridens,” agree with the Arabic use, which suits all the places in Heb.” smiled, was gladdened, was cheered.” Others here, “made to dawn,” from the Arabic
- ft198 of the “mess” sent, ^{<04E3E>}Genesis 43:34; ^{<101E8>}2 Samuel 11:8; of the gifts of one superior in rank, ^{<70E8>}Esther 2:18; ^{<241E>}Jeremiah 40:5
- ft199 This is the Hebrew construction. The English Version has followed Kimchi in assuming a transposition, which is, however, only as much as to say that the two idioms are equivalent, as they are. To “call the farmer to mourning,” or to “proclaim mourning to the farmer” mean the same thing, though the Hebrew words can grammatically only mean the last
- ft200 “Even to the days of a Proconsul under Tiberius.” Tertull. Apol. 9. pp. 20,21. Oxford Translation and note k. Gesenius quotes 3 Phoenician inscriptions, attesting the Punic child-sacrifices to Baal, Thes. p. 795)
- ft201 As described Diod. xx. 14. The rabbis, however, speak of the sacrifices to Molech in exactly the same way, Carpzoff, Ant. 87. 484

- ft202 The Syr. writes “Chevon;” Jonathan, “Chiun;” Aq. and Symm. in Jerome, “Chion.” The “Rephan” of the Septuagint may be only a different way of writing Chevan, or it may be an Egyptian equivalent
- ft203 In Persian, in the Dabistan, it is said, “The image of Keiwan was of black stone.” The Bundelesh, in enumerating the planets, places “Kivan,” the fifth, as does the Codex Nasoraeus (ed. Norb. p. 54) but all these are comparatively modern. The Copt-Arabic list of planets, which explains Rephan by the Arabic “Zochal” i. q., Saturn, may very probably have its name Rephan from the Greek
- ft204 Birch, from the slab in the British Museum (quoted by Bunsen, Aeg. Stella, i. 460)
- ft205 **ry**[**ṭ**;^{<ḥ8163> <ḥ8170>} Leviticus 17:7. rendered in the English version as “devils;” but **ry**[**ṭ**;^{<ḥ8163>} literally, “the hairy,” is the Hebrew name of the goat, as hircus from hirtus, hirsutus. The name for “devils” in the Pentateuch is **dve**^{<ḥ7700> <ḥ8217>} Deuteronomy 32:17. Jeroboam endeavored fruitlessly to revive the worship. “He made him priests for the high places and the Seirim and Agalim which he had made” (^{<ḥ4115>} 2 Chronicles 11:15). “Seirim” is doubtless to be taken in its literal sense, “he goats,” as “Agalim,” with which it is joined, is of “calves”
- ft206 Pan or Mendes, worshiped under the goat, was nature in one great aggregate, the oldest of their gods, according to themselves (Herodotus, ii. 145. add 46), as being, in fact, the principle of life, apart from its Author. In Egyptian idolatry, the goat was accounted a special manifestation of that principle
- ft207 The phrase of ^{<ḥ0017>} Numbers 1:17 occurs only in the Books of Chronicles (^{<ḥ3226>} 1 Chronicles 12:31; 16:41; ^{<ḥ4215>} 2 Chronicles 28:15; 31:19
- ft208 Seetzen puts them at 250. Nachlass, i. 13-15. in Ritt. xvii. 1042. Burckhardt (Syria 146) says, “about a dozen” supply the city itself
- ft209 As in Arabic and Syriac. In Hebrew, it is used of a vine pouring itself out, in luxuriance, ^{<ḥ3706>} Ezekiel 17:6; of a curtain overlapping, Ezek 24:12,13; of a headdress hanging over, ^{<ḥ3215>} Ezekiel 23:15; of wisdom poured away and gone, ^{<ḥ4407>} Jeremiah 49:7
- ft210 The central meaning of the Arabic root is “anticipating another;” then hurry, negligence, excess, inadvertence in act, and, in speech, exaggeration in praise, and (conj. iii.) “got the first word,” “spoke precipitately, the tongue outrunning the sense.” Abu’l Walid applies

this last meaning, that “they, poured out words and measured out defilements.” He says also that the corresponding Arabic participle is used of those “who extemporize poetry, that is, sing extempore without thought.” See the Arabic in Gesenius

- ft211 In reference to the time before it was built, it is called “a sanctuary,” ~~<1278>~~ Exodus 25:8; ~~<4108>~~ 2 Chronicles 20:8
- ft212 The recent horrors about Mount Lebanon have renewed this description, showing how the wrong to the Christian woman was a devilish triumph over the helpless relation
- ft213 The English Version has followed the correction of the Qere’ (margin). The textual reading is almost always the best
- ft214 The Kethib (text) is probably a second peculiarity as to a guttural in Amos (see above p. 152), as a different pronunciation of what stands in the Qere’ (margin)
- ft215 Hitzig says, “Since the sun was to set at noonday, and since, just before, mention was made of the death of Jeroboam” (rather of the destruction of the house of Jeroboam, ~~<300B>~~ Amos 7:9, the mention of his own death being merely a distortion of Amaziah), “we have to think of the total eclipse which took place in the year of his death, Feb. 9. 784 B.C., which reached its center at Jerusalem about 1.”
- ft216 “9 a.m. Greenwich time; or at 11h.24m a.m. Jerusalem time.” Letter of Robert Main, Radcliffe Observer and President of the Royal Astronomical Society. Upon my inquiring as to the facts of this eclipse to which Hitzig had drawn attention, Mr. Main kindly directed Mr. Quirling his First Assistant to compute under his own superintendence the circumstances of the Eclipse of 784, B.C. Feb. 9. which had “originally been calculated by Pingre’ (Mem. de l’Aead. des. Inscr. vol. 52 in which the year is given 783 B.C. In l’ Art de verifier les Dates, T, i. the years are all altered by one unit, to make them agree with the mode of reckoning in ordinary chronology). Mr. Quirling, employing Hansen’s lunar tables and Hansen’s and Olufsen’s solar tables, found, that on the given day, there was an eclipse, which would however be very small for Palestine, and that the apparent diameters of the sun and moon were so nearly equal that at no place could the totality be of more than 40s duration. The general conjunction was at 9h. a.m. (Greenwich time, that is, 11h. 24m. Jerusalem time), of Feb. 9. and the Geo-centric Semi-diameters of the Sun and moon were 16’ 17.” 25.

and 16'0" 88. at Greenwich noon." "Pingre's calculation must have been tolerably accurate, for he gives 11 1/4 a.m. Paris time"

ft217 Mr. Main has kindly furnished me with a detailed account of the path of the central eclipse from which the following statements are taken. "It began — 10 degrees 13 minutes latitude; 347 degrees 49 minutes longitude at 19h 1m (7h 1m a.m.) Greenwich Time, and ended at, + 32 degrees 35 minutes latitude; 100 degrees 42 minutes longitude at 22h 32m (10h 32m) Greek time." Samaria is 32 degrees 15 minutes latitude; 35 degrees 14 minutes longitude. "The path of the central eclipse was — 14 latitude; 30 6 minutes longitude; 10 latitude; 38 degrees 14 minutes longitude

ft218 Usserii Annales, a.m. 3213. pp. 45ff. (Prof. Donkin has verified Ussher's statement as to the eclipse Nov. 8. 771 B.C., and calculated that it was visible in Palestine at 12.55 p.m. Dr. Stanley, (John Ch. ii. 363) who reports this, supposes, in the way of his school, that Amos might be alluding to a past event, contrary to the date ~~3000~~ Amos 1:1, according to which he prophesied not later than 784 B.C. Ed. 2)

ft219 Mr. Main tells me that, in the old mode of marking eclipses, the whole was divided into 12 digits, so that eclipses of 12 digits were total those of 11 and 10, large

ft220 Others render, "break them," that is, the capitals, "in pieces on the head of all of them

ft221 "The caves in Carmel are exceeding many, especially on the west. It is said above 1,000. In one part, there are 400 close together." v. Richter, 65. "more than 2,000," Mislin, Les saints Lieux, ii. 46. in Smith's Bibl. Dict.

ft222 "Intertropical, or near the tropics, between 90 and 230 degree long. meridian of Ferro." Schlegel, Essai sur la physion. d. serpens, p. 491. Cantor, lb. Orr; "The Hydrophidae are found exclusively in the seas of the warmer parts of the eastern hemisphere, on the coasts of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Some of them occur as far south as the coasts of North New Zealand and Australia. A few are found occasionally in salt-water tanks and canals, but they usually confine themselves to the Ocean, and rarely ascend beyond the mouths of rivers. They are exceedingly venomous and are regarded with great dread by the fishermen in whose nets they are not infrequently caught." Circle of the Sciences, T. iii. p. 111. Dr. Rolleston (Linacre Professor at Oxford)

who kindly supplied me with these facts informs me that up to this time the hydrophidae have only been found “in the Indian and the Pacific and the seas which are their dependencies;” but he drew my attention to the extreme warmth of the Red Sea and the causes of that warmth

^{ft223} “It is in great measure from the statements of the Ancients, that the presence of the Hydrophidae in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf has been asserted; which may well be, although their observations need confirmation from further researches.” Schlegel, p. 490. The accuracy of Pliny’s statement as to their venom, which modern inquiry has confirmed, (Schlegel, p. 488. Dumeril, *Erpetologie* vii. 1316-18. Cantor. p. 303,6,9,10,11. Orr, above