

CHAPTER 12

In this chapter we have,

I. A high charge drawn up against both Israel and Judah for their sins, which were the ground of God's controversy with them (v. 1, 2). Particularly the sin of fraud and injustice, which Ephraim is charged with (v. 7), and justifies himself in (v. 8). And the sin of idolatry (v. 11), by which God is provoked to contend with them (v. 14).

II. The aggravations of the sins they are charged with, taken from the honour God put upon their father Jacob (v. 3-5), the advancement of them into a people from low and mean beginnings (v. 12, 13), and the provision he had made them of helps for their souls by the prophets he sent them (v. 10).

III. A call to the unconverted to turn to God (v. 6).

IV. An intimation of mercy that God had in store for them (v. 9).

~~~~HOSEA 12:1-6

THE CRIMES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

In these verses,

I. Ephraim is convicted of folly, in staying himself upon Egypt and Assyria, when he was in straits (v. 1): *Ephraim feeds on wind*, that is, feeds himself with vain hopes of assistance from man, when he is at variance with God; and, when he meets with disappointments, he still pursues the same game, and greedily pants and *follows after the east wind*, which he cannot catch hold of, nor, if he could, would it be nourishing, nay, would be noxious. We say of the *wind in the east*, It is *good neither for man nor beast*. It was said (~~~~Hosea 8:7), *He sows the wind*; and as he sows so he reaps (*He reaps the whirlwind*); and as he reaps so he feeds — He feeds on the wind, the *east wind*. Note, Those that make creatures their confidence make fools of themselves, and take a great deal of pains to put a cheat upon their own souls and to prepare vexation for themselves: *He*

daily increaseth lies, that is, multiplies his correspondences and leagues with his neighbours, which will all prove deceitful to him; nay, they will prove desolation to him. Those very nations that he makes his refuge will prove his ruin. Those that stay themselves upon lies will be still coveting to increase them, that they may build their hopes firmly upon them; as if many lies twisted together would make one truth, or many broken reeds and rotten supports one sound one, which is a great delusion and will prove to them a great desolation; for those that *observe lying vanities* the more they increase them the more disappointments they prepare for themselves and the further they run from *their own mercies*. The men of Ephraim did so when they thought to secure the Assyrians in their interests by a *solemn league*, signed, sealed, and sworn to: *They make a covenant with the Assyrians*, but they will find there is no hold of them; that potent prince will be a slave to his word no longer than he pleases. They thought to secure the Egyptians for their confederates by a rich present of the commodities of their country, not only to purchase their favour, but to show that their friendship was worth having: *Oil is carried into Egypt*. But the Egyptians, when they had got the bribe, dropped the cause, and Ephraim was never the better for them. *Oleum perdidit et operam* — *The oil and the labour are both lost*. This was *feeding on wind*; this was *increasing lies and desolation*.

II. Judah is contended with too, and Jacob, which includes both Ephraim and Judah (v. 2): *The Lord has also a controversy with Judah*; for though he had a while ago *ruled with God*, and been *faithful with the saints*, yet now he begins to degenerate. Or though, in keeping close to the house of David and the house of Aaron, and in them to the covenants of royalty and priesthood, they were so far *in the right*, in the former they *ruled with God* and in the latter were *faithful to the saints*, yet upon other accounts God *had a controversy* with them, and would punish them. Note, *Mens being in the right in some things, in the main things, will not exempt them from correction, and therefore should not exempt them from reproof, for those things wherein they are in the wrong*. *There were those of the seven churches of Asia whom Christ approved and commended, and yet he adds, Nevertheless I have something against thee*. So here; though the seed of Jacob are a people near to God, yet God will punish them according to the evil ways they are found in and the evil doings they are found guilty of; for God sees sin even in his own people, and will reckon with them for it.

III. Both Ephraim and Judah are put in mind of their father Jacob, whose seed they were and whose name they bore (and it was their honour), of the extraordinary things which he did and which God did for him, that they might be the more ashamed of themselves for degenerating from so illustrious a progenitor and staining the lustre of so great a name, and yet that they might be engaged and encouraged to return to God, the God of their father Jacob, in hopes for his sake to find favour with him. He had called this people Jacob (v. 2), threatening to punish them; but *how shall I give them up?* How shall that dear name be forgotten?

1. Three glorious things concerning Jacob the person Jacob the people are here put in mind of; but by brief hints only, for it is presumed that they knew the story: —

(1.) His struggling with Esau in the womb: There *he took his brother by the heel*, v. 3. We have the story ^{<125>}Genesis 25:26. It was an early act of bravery, and an effort for the best precedency, a pious ambition for that birthright in the covenant which Esau is justly branded as profane for despising. But his degenerate seed, by mingling with the nations, and making leagues with them, profaned that crown, and laid that honour in the dust, which he so gloriously put in for. Then it was that the dominion was given to him: *The elder shall serve the younger*. Then he was owned of God as his beloved: *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*. But they had by their sin forfeited both the love of God and dominion over their neighbours.

(2.) His wrestling with the angel. “Remember how your father Jacob had *power with God by his own strength*, the strength he had by the gift of God, who *pleaded not against him by his great power, but put strength into him*,” ^{<126>}Job 22:6. The angel he wrestled with is called *God*, and therefore is supposed to be the *Son of God*, the angel of the covenant. “God was both a combatant with Jacob and an assistant of him, showing, in the latter respect, greater strength than in the former, fighting as it were against him with his left hand and for him with his right, and to that putting greater force.” So, Dr. Pocock. The providence of God fought against him when he met with one danger after another, in his return homewards; but the grace of God enabled him to go on cheerfully in his way, and, when his faith acted upon the divine promise that was for him prevailed above his fears that arose from the divine providences that were against him, then *by his strength he had power with God*. But it refers

especially to his prayer for deliverance from Esau, and for a blessing: *He had power over the angel and prevailed, for he wept and made supplication*. Here was a mixture of the greatest courage and the greatest tenderness, Jacob wrestling like a champion and yet weeping like a child. Note, Prayers and tears are the weapons with which the saints have obtained the most glorious victories. Thus Jacob commenced *Israel* — a *prince with God*; his posterity was called *Israel*, but they were unworthy the name, for they had forfeited and lost their communion with God, and their interest in him, by revolting from their duty to him.

(3.) His meeting with God at Bethel: God *found him* in Bethel, and *there he spoke with us*. God found him the first time in Bethel, as he went to Padanaram (⁽¹²³⁰⁾Genesis 28:10), and a second time after his return, ⁽¹²³¹⁾Genesis 35:9, etc. It is probable that this refers to both; for in both God spoke to Jacob, and renewed the covenant with him, and the prophet might very well say, *There he spoke with us* who are the seed of Jacob, for both times that God spoke with Jacob at Bethel he spoke with him concerning his seed. ⁽¹²³⁴⁾Genesis 28:14, *Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth*; and ⁽¹²³²⁾Genesis 35:12, *This land I will give unto thy seed*. Thus God then covenanted with him and his seed after him. Now justly are they upbraided with this; for in that very place which their father Jacob called *Bethel* — *the house of God*, in remembrance of the communion he there had with God, did they set up one of the calves, and worship it; thus they turned that Bethel into a *Beth-aven* — *a house of iniquity*. There God *spoke with them* exceedingly great and precious promises, which they had despised and lost the benefit of.

2. Two inferences are here drawn from these stories concerning Jacob, for instruction to his seed: —

(1.) Here is a use of information. From what passed between God and Jacob we may learn that *Jehovah, the Lord God of hosts, is the God of Israel*; he was the God of Jacob, and this is *his memorial* throughout all the generations of the seed of Jacob (v. 5) — the more shame for those who forgot the memorial of their church, deserted the God of their fathers, and exchanged a *Lord of hosts* for Baalim. Note, Those only are accounted the people of God that keep up a memorial of God, such a memorial of him as he himself has instituted, by which he makes himself known and will have us to remember him. Here are two memorials of his, by which he

is distinguished from all others, and is to be acknowledged and adored by us.

[1.] The former denotes his *existence of himself*. He is Jehovah, much the same with *I AM*, the same that *was, and is, and is to come*, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. Jehovah is *his memorial*, his peculiar name.

[2.] The latter denotes his dominion over all: He is the *God of hosts*, that has all the hosts of heaven and earth at his beck and command, and makes what use he pleases of them. Jacob saw *Mahanaim* — God's *two hosts*, about the time that he *wrestled with the angel* (^(~~xxx~~)Genesis 32:1, 2), and so learned to call God the *God of hosts*, and transmitted it to us as his memorial. God's names, titles, and attributes, are the memorials of him; there is no need for images to be such. And that which was a revelation of God to one is his memorial to many, to all generations.

(2.) Here is a use of exhortation, v. 6. “Is this so, that Jacob thy father had this communion with the Lord God of hosts, and is this still his memorial?” Then,

[1.] Let those that have gone astray from God be converted to him: *Therefore turn thou to thy God*. He that was the God of Jacob is the God of Israel, is *thy God*; from him thou hast unjustly and unkindly revolted; therefore turn thou to him by repentance and faith, turn to him as thine, to love him, obey him, and depend upon him.

[2.] Let those that are converted to him walk with him in all holy conversation and godliness: “*Keep mercy and judgment*, mercy in relieving and succouring the poor and distressed, judgment in rendering to all their due; be kind to all; do wrong to none. *Keep piety and judgment*” (so it may be read); “live *righteously and godly in this present world*; be devout and be honest. Do not only practise these occasionally, but be careful, and constant, and conscientious in the practice of them.”

[3.] Let those that walk with God be encouraged to live a life of dependence upon him: “*Wait on thy God continually*, with a believing expectation to receive from him all the succours and supplies thou standest in need of.” Those that live a life of conformity to God may live a life of confidence and comfort in him, if it be not their own fault. Let our *eyes be ever towards the Lord*, and let us preserve a holy security and serenity of mind under the protection of the divine power and the influence of the

divine favour, looking, without anxiety, for a dubious event, and by faith keeping our spirits sedate and even; this is waiting on God as our God in covenant, and this we must do continually.

~~317~~ HOSEA 12:7-14

REPROOFS FOR SIN

Here are intermixed, in these verses,

I. Reproofs for sin. When God is coming forth to contend with a people, that he may demonstrate his own righteousness, he will demonstrate their unrighteousness. Ephraim was called to turn to his God and *keep judgment* (v. 6); now, to show that he had need of that call, he is charged with turning from his God by idolatry, and breaking the laws of justice and judgment.

1. He is here charged with injustice against the precepts of the second table, v. 7, 8. Here observe,

(1.) What the sin is wherewith he is charged: *He is a merchant*. The margin reads it as a proper name, *He is Canaan*, or a Canaanite, unworthy to be denominated from Jacob and Israel, and worthy to be cast out with a curse from this good land, as the Canaanites were. See ~~301E~~ Amos 9:7. But Canaan sometimes signifies *a merchant*, and therefore is most likely to do so here, where Ephraim is charged with deceit in trade. Though God had given his people a land flowing with milk and honey, yet he did not forbid them to enrich themselves by merchandise, and they succeeded the Canaanites in that as well as in their husbandry; they sucked *the abundance of the seas and the treasures hidden in the sand*,

~~6579~~ Deuteronomy 33:19. And, if they had been fair merchants, it would have been no reproach at all to them, but an honour and a blessing. But he is such a merchant as the Canaanites were, who were honest only with good looking to, and, if they could, cheated all they dealt with. Ephraim does so; he deceives and thereby oppresses. Note, There is oppression by fraud as well as oppression by force. It is not only princes, lords, and masters, that oppress their subjects, tenants, and servants, but merchants and traders are often guilty of oppressing those they deal with, when they impose upon their ignorance, or take advantage of their necessity, to make

hard bargains with them, or are rigorous and severe in exacting their debts. Ephraim cheated,

[1.] With a great deal of art and cunning: *The balances of deceit are in his hand.* He uses balances, and delivers his goods by weight and measure, as if he would be very exact, but they are balances of deceit, false weights and false measures, and thus, under colour of doing right, he does the greatest wrong. Note, God has his eye upon merchants and traders, when they are weighing their goods and paying their money, whether they do honestly or deceitfully. He observes what balances they have in their hand, and how they hold them; and, though those they deal with may not be aware of that sleight of hand with which they make them balances of deceit, God sees it, and knows it. Trades by the wit of man are made *mysteries*, but it is a pity that by the sin of man they should ever be made *mysteries of iniquity*.

[2.] With a great deal of pleasure and pride: *He loves to oppress.* To oppress is bad enough, but to love to do so is much worse. His conscience does not check and reprove him for it, as it ought to do; if it did, though he committed the sin, he could not delight in it; but his corruptions are so strong, and have so triumphed over his convictions, that he not only loves the gain of oppression, but he loves to oppress, sins for sinning-sake, and takes a pleasure in out-witting and over-reaching those that suspect him not.

(2.) How he justifies himself in this sin, v. 8. Wicked men will have something to say for themselves now when they are told of their faults, some frivolous turn-off or other wherewith to evade the convictions of the word. Ephraim stands indicted for a common cheat. Now see what he pleads to the indictment. He does not deny the charge, nor plead, Not guilty, yet does not make a penitent confession of it and ask pardon, but insists upon his own justification. Suppose it were so that he did use balances of deceit, yet,

[1.] He pleads that he had got a good estate. Let the prophet say what he pleased of his deceit, of the sin of it and the curse of God that attended it, he could not be convinced there was any harm or danger in it, for this he was sure of that he had thriven in it: *“Yet I have become rich, I have found me out substance.* Whatever you make of it, I have made a good hand of it.” Note, Carnal hearts are often confirmed in a good opinion of their evil ways by their worldly prosperity and success in those ways. But it is a

great mistake. Every word in what Ephraim says here proclaims his folly. *First*, It is folly to call the riches of this world substance, for they are things that are not, ^{<306>}Proverbs 23:5. *Secondly*, It is folly to think that we have them of ourselves, to say (as some read it), *I have made myself rich*; what *substance* I have is owing purely to my ingenuity and industry — *I have found it; my might and the power of my hand have gotten me this wealth*. *Thirdly*, It is folly to think that what we have is for ourselves. *I have found me out substance*, as if we had it for our own proper use and behoof, whereas we hold it in trust, only as stewards. *Fourthly*, It is folly to think that riches are things to be gloried in, and to say with exultation, *I have become rich*. Riches are not the honours of the soul, are not peculiar to the best men, nor sure to us; and therefore *let not the rich man glory in his riches*, ^{<309>}James 1:9, 10. *Fifthly*, It is folly to think that growing rich in a sinful way makes us innocent, or will make us safe, or may make us easy, in that way; for the prosperity of fools deceives and destroys them. See ^{<297>}Isaiah 47:10; ^{<302>}Proverbs 1:32.

[2.] He pleads that he had kept a good reputation. It is common for sinners, when they are justly reproved by their ministers, to appeal to their neighbours, and because they know no ill of them, or will say none, or think well of what the prophets charge them with as bad, fly in the face of their reprovers: *In all my labours* (says Ephraim) *they shall find no iniquity in me that were sin*. Note, Carnal hearts are apt to build a good opinion of themselves upon the fair character they have among their neighbours. Ephraim was very secure; for, *First*, All his neighbours knew him to be diligent in his business; they had an eye upon *all his labours*, and commended him for them. *Men will praise thee when thou doest well for thyself*. *Secondly*, None of them knew him to be deceitful in his business. He acted with so much policy that nobody could say to the contrary but that he acted with integrity. For either,

1. He concealed the fraud, so that none discovered it: “Whatever iniquity there is, *they shall find* none;” as if no iniquity were displeasing to God, and damning to the soul, but that which is open and scandalous before men. What will it avail us that men shall find no iniquity in us, when God finds a great deal, and will bring every secret work, even secret frauds, into judgment? Or,

2. He excused the fraud, so that none condemned it: “*They shall find no iniquity in me that were sin*, nothing very bad, nothing but what is very

excusable, only some venial sins, sins not worth speaking of," which they think God will make nothing of because they do not. It is a fashionable iniquity; it is customary; it is what every body does; it is pleasant; it is gainful; and this, they think, is no iniquity that is sin; nobody will think the worse of them for it. But God sees not as man sees; he judges not as man judges.

3. He is here charged with idolatry, against the precepts of the first table, with that iniquity which is in a special manner vanity, the making and worshipping of images, which are vanities (v. 11): *Surely they are vanity*; they do not profit, but deceive. Now the prophet mentions two places notorious for idolatry: —

(1.) Gilead on the other side Jordan, which had been branded for it before (²⁰⁶⁸Hosea 6:8): *Is there iniquity in Gilead?* It is a thing to be wondered at; it is a thing to be sadly lamented. What! iniquity in Gilead? idolatry there? Gilead was a fruitful pleasant country (pleasant to a proverb, ²⁰¹⁶Jeremiah 22:6), and does it so ill requite the Lord? It was a frontier-country, and lay much exposed to the insults of enemies, and therefore stood in special need of the divine protection; what! and yet by iniquity throw itself out of that protection? *Is there iniquity in Gilead?* Yea,

(2.) And in Gilgal too; there they *sacrifice bullocks* (²⁰¹⁵Hosea 9:15), and there *their altars* which they have set up, either to strange gods in opposition to his own appointed altar, are as thick as *heaps of manure in the furrows of the field* that is to be sown, ²⁰¹¹Hosea 8:11. *Is there iniquity in Gilead* only? so some. Is it only in those remote parts of the nation that people are so superstitious, where they border upon other nations? No; they are as bad at Gilgal. In Gilead God protected Jacob their father (of whom he had been speaking) from the rage of Laban; and will you there commit iniquity?

II. Here are threatenings of wrath for sin. Some make that to be so (v. 9), *I will make thee to dwell in tabernacles as in the days of the appointed time*, that is, I will bring thee into such a condition as the Israelites were in when they dwelt in tents and wandered for forty years; that was the *time appointed in the wilderness*. Ephraim forgot that God brought him out of Egypt and brought him up to be what he was, and was proud of his wealth, and took sinful courses to increase it; and therefore God threatens to bring him to a tabernacle-state again, to a poor, mean, desolate, unsettled

condition. Note, It is just with God, when men have by their sins turned their tents into houses, by his judgments to turn their houses into tents again. However, that is certainly a threatening (v. 14), *Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly*. See how men are deceived in their opinion of themselves, and how they will one day be undeceived. Ephraim thought that there was no iniquity in him that deserved to be called sin (v. 8); but God told him that there was that in him which was sin, and would be found so if he did not repent and reform; for,

1. It was extremely offensive to his God: *Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly* with his iniquities, which were so distasteful to God, and to him too would be *bitterness in the latter end*. He was so wilful in sinning against his knowledge and convictions that any one might see, and say, that he designed no other than to provoke God in the highest degree.

2. It would certainly be destructive to himself; that cannot be otherwise which provokes God against him, and kindles the fire of his wrath. Therefore,

(1.) He shall take away his forfeited life: *He shall leave his blood upon him*, that is, he shall not hold him guiltless, but bring upon him that death which is the wages of sin. *His blood shall be upon his own head* (³⁰¹⁶2 Samuel 1:16), for his own iniquity has testified against him and he alone shall bear it. Note, When sinners perish their blood is left upon them.

(2.) He shall take away his forfeited honour: *His reproach shall his Lord return upon him*. God is *his Lord*; he had by idolatry and other sins reproached the Lord, and done dishonour to him, and to his name and family, and had given occasion to others to reproach him; and now God will return the reproach upon him, according to the word he has spoken, that *those who despise him shall be lightly esteemed*. Note, Shameful sins shall have shameful punishments. If Ephraim put contempt on his God, he shall be so reduced that all his neighbours shall look with contempt upon him.

III. Here are memorials of former mercy, which come in to convict them of base ingratitude in revolting from God. Let them blush to remember,

1. That God had raised them from meanness. When Ephraim had become rich, and was proud of that, he forgot that which God (that he might not forget it) obliged them every year to acknowledge (⁴³¹⁵Deuteronomy 26:5),

A Syrian ready to perish was my father. But God here puts them in mind of it, v. 12. Let them remember, not only the honours of their father Jacob, what a *mighty prince* he was with God, v. 3 (an honour which they had no share in while they were in rebellion against God), but what a poor servant he was to Laban, which was sufficient to mortify those that were puffed up with the estates they had raised. *Jacob fled into Syria* from a malicious brother, and there served a covetous uncle *for a wife*, and *for a wife he kept sheep*, because he had not estate to endow a wife with. Jacob was poor, and low, and a fugitive; therefore his posterity ought not to be proud. He was a plain man, dwelling in tents, and keeping sheep; therefore *balances of deceit* ill became them. He *served for a wife* that was not a Canaanitess, as Esau's wives were; therefore it was a shame for them to degenerate into Canaanites, and mingle with the nations. God wonderfully preserved him in his flight and preserved him in his service, so that he multiplied exceedingly, and from that *root* in a dry ground sprang an illustrious nation, that bore his name, which magnifies the goodness of God both to him and them and leaves them under the stain of base ingratitude to that God who was their founder and benefactor.

2. That God had rescued them from misery, had raised them to what they were, not only out of poverty, but out of slavery (v. 13), which laid them under much stronger obligations to serve him and under a yet deeper guilt in serving other gods.

(1.) God *brought Israel out of Egypt* on purpose that they might serve him, and by redeeming them out of bondage acquired a special title to them and to their service.

(2.) He preserved them, as sheep are kept by the shepherd's care. He preserved them from Pharaoh's rage at the sea, even at the Red Sea, protected them from all the perils of the wilderness, and provided for them.

(3.) He did this *by a prophet*, Moses, who, though he is called *king in Jeshurun* (^{483B}Deuteronomy 33:5), yet did what he did for Israel *as a prophet*, by direction from God and by the power of his word. The ensign of his authority was not a royal sceptre, but the *rod of God*; with that he summoned both Egypt's plagues and Israel's blessings. Moses, as a prophet, was a type of Christ (^{482B}Acts 3:22), and it is by Christ as a prophet that we are brought out of the Egypt of sin and Satan by the power

of his truth. Now this shows how very unworthy and ungrateful this people were,

[1.] In rejecting their God, who had brought them out of Egypt, which, in the preface to the commandments, is particularly mentioned as a reason for the first, why they should have no other gods before him.

[2.] In despising and persecuting his prophets, whom they should have loved and valued, and have studied to answer God's end in sending them, for the sake of that prophet by whom God had brought them out of Egypt and preserved them in the wilderness. Note, The benefit we have had by the word of God greatly aggravates our sin and folly if we put any slight upon the word of God.

3. That God had taken care of their education as they grew up. This instance of God's goodness we have, v. 10. As by a prophet he delivered them, so *by prophets* he still continued to speak to them. Man, who is formed out of the earth, is fed out of the earth; so that nation, that was formed by prophecy, by prophecy was fed and taught; *beginning at Moses*, and so going on *to all the prophets* through the several ages of that church, we find that divine revelation was all along their tuition.

(1.) They had prophets raised up among themselves (^{<021>}Amos 2:11), a succession of them, were scarcely ever without a Spirit of prophecy among them more or less, from Moses to Malachi.

(2.) These prophets were *seers*; they had *visions*, and *dreams*, in which God discovered his mind to them immediately, with a full assurance that it was his mind, ^{<022>}Numbers 12:6.

(3.) These visions were multiplied; God spoke not only *once, yea, twice*, but many a time; if one vision was not regarded, he sent another. The prophets had variety of visions, and frequent repetitions of the same.

(4.) God *spoke* to them *by the prophets*. What the prophets *received from the Lord* they plainly and faithfully delivered to them. The people at Mount Sinai begged that God would speak to them by men like themselves, and he did so.

(5.) In speaking to them by the prophets he *used similitudes*, to make the messages he sent by them intelligible, more affecting, and more likely to be remembered. The visions they saw were often similitudes, and their

discourses were embellished with very apt comparisons. And, as God by his prophets, so by his Son, he *used similitudes*, for *he opened his mouth in parables*. Note, God keeps an account, whether we do or no, of the sermons we hear; and those that have long enjoyed the means of grace in purity, plenty, and power, that have been frequently, faithfully, and familiarly, told the mind of God, will have a great deal to answer for another day if they persist in a course of iniquity.

IV. Here are intimations of further mercy, and this remembered too in the midst of sin and wrath (as some understand v. 9): “*I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, who then and there took thee to be my people, and have approved myself thy God ever since, in a constant series of merciful providences, have yet a kindness for thee, bad as thou art; and I will make thee to dwell in tabernacles, not as in the wilderness, but as in the days of the solemn feast,*” the feast of tabernacles, which was celebrated with great joy, ^{<0330>}Leviticus 23:40.

- 1.** They shall be made to see, by the grace of God, that though they are rich, and have found out substance, yet they are but in a tabernacle-state, and have in their worldly wealth *no continuing city*.
- 2.** They shall yet have cause to rejoice in God, and have opportunity to do it in public ordinances. The feast of tabernacles was the first solemn feast the Jews kept after their return out of Babylon, ^{<0304>}Ezra 3:4.
- 3.** This, as other promises, was to have its full accomplishment in the grace of the gospel, which provides tabernacles for believers in their way to heaven, and furnishes them with matter of joy, holy joy, joy in God, such as was in the feast of tabernacles, ^{<0418>}Zechariah 14:18, 19.