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ISAIAH 14: 1 For the LORD will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land. The foreigner will join himself with them, and they will unite with the house of Jacob.

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Deliverance of Israel from captivity, which shall follow the downfall of the great Babylonish empire, Isa 14:1, Isa 14:2. Triumphant ode or song of the children of Jacob, for the signal manifestation of Divine vengeance against their oppressors, vv. 3-23. Prophecy against the Assyrians, Isa 14:24, Isa 14:25. Certainty of the prophecy, and immutability of the Divine counsels, Isa 14:26, Isa 14:27. Palestine severely threatened, Isa 14:28-31. God shall establish Zion in these troublous times, Isa 14:32.

#### Verse 1

And will yet choose Israel - That is, will still regard Israel as his chosen people; however he may seem to desert them, by giving them up to their enemies, and scattering them among the nations. Judah is sometimes called Israel; see Eze 13:16; Mal 1:1; Mal 2:11 : but the name of Jacob and of Israel, used apparently with design in this place, each of which names includes the twelve tribes, and the other circumstances mentioned in this and the next verse, which did not in any complete sense accompany the return from the captivity of Babylon, seem to intimate that this whole prophecy extends its views beyond that event.

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ISAIAH 14: 2 The peoples will take them, and bring them to their place. The house of Israel will possess them in the LORD's land for servants and for handmaids. They will take as captives those whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

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#### Verse 2

For servants and handmaids - For thrallis and thralleses. - Old Bible. Male and female slaves.

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ISAIAH 14: 3 It will happen in the day that the LORD will give you rest from your sorrow, from your trouble, and from the hard service in which you were made to serve,

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#### Verse 3

In the day "In that day" - ביום ההוא bayom hahu. The word ההוא hahu is added in two MSS. of Kennicott's, and was in the copies from which the Septuagint and Vulgate translated: εν τη ημερα εκεινη, in die illa, (η αναπαυση, MS. Pachom. adding η), in that day. This is a matter of no great consequence: however, it restores the text to the common form, almost constantly used on such occasions; and is one among many instances of a word apparently lost out of the printed copies.

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ISAIAH 14: 4 that you will take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, "How the oppressor has ceased! The golden city has ceased!"

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 Verse 4

This proverb "This parable" - מִשַּׁל *mashal*, I take this to be the general name for poetic style among the Hebrews, including every sort of it, as ranging under one or other, or all of the characters, of sententious, figurative, and sublime; which are all contained in the original notion, or in the use and application of the word *mashal*. Parables or proverbs, such as those of Solomon, are always expressed in short pointed sentences; frequently figurative, being formed on some comparison; generally forcible and authoritative, both in the matter and the form. And such in general is the style of the Hebrew poetry. The verb *mashal* signifies to rule; to exercise authority; to make equal; to compare one thing with another; to utter parables, or acute, weighty, and powerful speeches, in the form and manner of parables, though not properly such. Thus Balaam's first prophecy, (Num 23:7-10), is called his *mashal*; though it has hardly any thing figurative in it: but it is beautifully sententious, and, from the very form and manner of it, has great spirit, force, and energy. Thus Job's last speeches, in answer to his three friends, chap. 27-31, are called *mashals*; from no one particular character, which discriminates them from the rest of the poem, but from the sublime, the figurative, the sententious manner which equally prevails through the whole poem, and makes it one of the first and most eminent examples extant of the truly great and beautiful in poetic style. See the note on Pro 1:1 (note).

The Septuagint in this place render the word by ἄθρησις, a lamentation. They plainly consider the speech here introduced as a piece of poetry, and of that species of poetry which we call the elegiac; either from the subject, it being a poem on the fall and death of the king of Babylon, or from the form of the composition, which is of the longer sort of Hebrew verse, in which the Lamentations of Jeremiah, called by the Septuagint ἄθρησις, are written.

The golden city ceased - מִדְּהַבָּה *madhebah*, which is here translated golden city, is a Chaldee word. Probably it means that golden coin or ingot which was given to the Babylonians by way of tribute. So the word is understood by the Vulgate, where it is rendered tributum; and by Montanus, who translates it aurea pensio, the golden pension. Kimchi seems to have understood the word in the same sense. De Rossi translates it auri dives, rich in gold, or auri exactrix, the exactor of gold; the same as the exactor of tribute.

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 ISAIAH 14: 5 The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers,

ISAIAH 14: 6 who struck the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke, who ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that no one restrained.

ISAIAH 14: 7 The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet. They break out song.

ISAIAH 14: 8 Yes, the fir trees rejoice with you, with the cedars of Lebanon, saying, "Since you are humbled, no lumberjack has come up against us."

ISAIAH 14: 9 Sheol from beneath has moved for you to meet you at your coming. It stirs up the departed spirits for you, even all the rulers of the earth. It has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

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## Verse 9

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee - That is, Nebuchadnezzar. "It (hell) hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the earth; - the ghosts (rephaim) of all the mighty ones, or goats, (עַתּוּדִי attudey), of the earth - all the oppressors of mankind." What a most terrible idea is here! Tyrannical kings who have oppressed and spoiled mankind, are here represented as enthroned in hell; and as taking a Satanic pleasure in seeing others of the same description enter those abodes of misery!

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ISAIAH 14: 10 They all will answer and ask you, "Have you also become as weak as we are? Have you become like us?"

ISAIAH 14: 11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, with the sound of your stringed instruments. Maggots are spread out under you, and worms cover you.

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#### Verse 11

Cover thee "Thy covering" - Twenty-eight MSS. (ten ancient) of Kennicott's, thirty-nine of De Rossi's, twelve editions, with the Septuagint and Vulgate, read ךַּמְכַשֶּׁחא umechassecha, in the singular number.

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ISAIAH 14: 12 How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, who laid the nations low!

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#### Verse 12

O Lucifer, son of the morning - The Versions in general agree in this translation, and render הֵיִלֵּל heilel as signifying Lucifer, Φωσφωρος, the morning star, whether Jupiter or Venus; as these are both bringers of the morning light, or morning stars, annually in their turn. And although the context speaks explicitly concerning Nebuchadnezzar, yet this has been, I know not why, applied to the chief of the fallen angels, who is most incongruously denominated Lucifer, (the bringer of light!) an epithet as common to him as those of Satan and Devil. That the Holy Spirit by his prophets should call this arch-enemy of God and man the light-bringer, would be strange indeed. But the truth is, the text speaks nothing at all concerning Satan nor his fall, nor the occasion of that fall, which many divines have with great confidence deduced from this text. O how necessary it is to understand the literal meaning of Scripture, that preposterous comments may be prevented! Besides, I doubt much whether our translation be correct. הֵיִלֵּל heilel, which we translate Lucifer, comes from יָלַל yalal, yell, howl, or shriek, and should be translated, "Howl, son of the morning;" and so the Syriac has understood it; and for this meaning Michaelis contends: see his reasons in Parkhurst, under הָלַל halal.

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ISAIAH 14: 13 You said in your heart, "I will ascend into heaven! I will exalt my throne above the stars of God! I will sit on the mountain of assembly, in the far north!"

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#### Verse 13

I will ascend into heaven - I will get the empire of the whole world. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God - above the Israelites, who are here termed the stars of God. So the Targum of Jonathan, and R. D. Kimchi. This chapter speaks not of the ambition and fall of Satan, but of the pride, arrogance, and fall of Nebuchadnezzar.

The mount of the congregation "The mount of the Divine Presence" - It appears plainly from Exo 25:22, and Exo 29:42, Exo 29:43, where God appoints the place of meeting with Moses, and promises to meet with him before the ark to commune with him, and to speak unto him; and to meet the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle; that the tabernacle, and afterwards the door of the tabernacle, and Mount Zion, (or Moriah, which is reckoned a part of Mount Zion), whereon it stood, was called the tabernacle, and the mount of convention or of appointment; not from the people's assembling there to perform the services of their religion, (which is what our translation expresses by calling it the tabernacle of the congregation), but because God appointed that for the place where he himself would meet with Moses, and commune with him, and would meet with the people. Therefore *הר מועד* *har moed*, the "mountain of the assembly," or *אהל מועד* *ohel moed*, the "tabernacle of the assembly," means the place appointed by God, where he would present himself; agreeably to which I have rendered it in this place, the mount of the Divine Presence.

ISAIAH 14: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds! I will make myself like the Most High!"

ISAIAH 14: 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit.

ISAIAH 14: 16 Those who see you will stare at you. They will ponder you, saying, "Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who shook kingdoms;

ISAIAH 14: 17 who made the world like a wilderness, and overthrew its cities; who didn't release his prisoners to their home?"

ISAIAH 14: 18 All the kings of the nations, sleep in glory, everyone in his own house.

ISAIAH 14: 19 But you are cast away from your tomb like an abominable branch, clothed with the slain, who are thrust through with the sword, who go down to the stones of the pit; like a dead body trodden under foot.

#### Verse 19

Like an abominable branch "Like the tree abominated" - That is, as an object of abomination and detestation; such as the tree is on which a malefactor has been hanged. "It is written," saith St. Paul, Gal 3:13, "Cursed is every man that hangeth on a tree," from Deu 21:23. The Jews therefore held also as accursed and polluted the tree itself on which a malefactor had been executed, or on which he had been hanged after having been put to death by stoning. "Non suspendunt super arbore, quae radicibus solo adhaereat; sed super ligno eradicato, ut ne sit excisio molesta: nam lignum, super quo fuit aliquis suspensus, cum suspendioso sepelitur; ne maneat illi malum nomen, et dicant homines, Istud est lignum, in quo suspensus est ille, ὁ δεινὰ . Sic lapis, quo aliquis fuit lapidatus; et gladius, quo fuit occisus is qui est occisus; et sudarium sive mantile, quo fuit aliquis strangulatus; omnia haec cum iis, qui perierunt, sepeliuntur." Maimonides, apud Casaub. in Baron. Exercitat. 16. An. 34, Numbers 134. "Cum itaque homo suspensum maximae esset abominationi - Judaei quoque prae caeteris abominabantur lignum quo fuerat suspensus, ita ut illud quoque terra tegerent, tanquam

rem abominabilem. Unde interpres Chaldaeus haec verba transtulit כחט טמור kechat temir, sicut virgultum absconditum, sive sepultum." Kalinski, Vaticinta Observationibus Illustrata, p. 342. "The Jews never hang any malefactor upon a tree that is growing in the earth, but upon a post fixed in the ground, that it might never be said, 'That is the tree on which such a one was hanged;' for custom required that the tree should be buried with the malefactor. In like manner the stone by which a criminal was stoned to death, or the sword by which he was beheaded, or the napkin or handkerchief by which he was strangled, should be buried with him in the same grave." "For as the hanged man was considered the greatest abomination, so the very post or wood on which he was hanged was deemed a most abominable thing, and therefore buried under the earth."

Agreeably to which Theodoret, Hist. Ecc 1:17, Ecc 1:18, in his account of the finding of the cross by Helena, says, "That the three crosses were buried in the earth near the place of our Lord's sepulcher." And this circumstance seems to confirm the relation of the discovery of the cross of Christ. The crosses were found where the custom required they should be buried.

The raiment of those that are slain "Clothed with the slain" - Thirty-five MSS., (ten ancient), and three editions, have the word fully written, לבוש lebush. It is not a noun, but the participle passive; thrown out among the common slain and covered with the dead bodies. So Ecc 1:11, the earth-worm is said to be his bedcovering. This reading is confirmed by two ancient MSS. in my own collection.

ISAIAH 14: 20 You will not join them in burial, because you have destroyed your land. You have killed your people. The seed of evildoers will not be named forever.

#### Verse 20

Because thou hast destroyed thy land, etc. "Because thou hast destroyed thy country; thou hast slain thy people" - Xenophon gives an instance of this king's wanton cruelty in killing the son of Gobrias, on no other provocation than that, in hunting, he struck a boar and a lion which the king had missed. Cyrop. 4:309.

ISAIAH 14: 21 Prepare for slaughter of his children because of the iniquity of their fathers, that they not rise up and possess the earth, and fill the surface of the world with cities.

ISAIAH 14: 22 "I will rise up against them," says the LORD of Armies, "and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and son and son's son," says the LORD.

ISAIAH 14: 23 "I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water. I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," says the LORD of Armies.

#### Verse 23

I will sweep it with the besom of destruction "I will plunge it in the miry gulf of destruction" - I have here very nearly followed the Version of the Septuagint; the reasons for which see in the last note on De Poesi Hebr. Praelect, xxviii.

The besom of destruction, as our Version renders it. **במטאטא** *bematate*. This, says Kimchi, is a Chaldee word: and it is worthy of remark that the prophet, writing to the Chaldeans, uses several words peculiar to their own language to point out the nature of the Divine judgments, and the causes of them. See the note on Jer 10:11 (note). Sixteen of Kennicott's MSS., and seventeen of De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, have the word **במטאטא** *bematatey*, in the plural. "I will sweep her with the besoms of destruction."

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ISAIAH 14: 24 The LORD of Armies has sworn, saying, "Surely, as I have thought, so shall it happen; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

ISAIAH 14: 25 that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and tread him under foot on my mountains. Then his yoke will leave them, and his burden leave their shoulders.

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#### Verse 25

I will break the Assyrian - upon my mountains "To crush the Assyrian - on my mountains" - The Assyrians and Babylonians are the same people, Herod. 1:199, 200. Babylon is reckoned the principal city in Assyria, *ibid.* 178. Strabo says the same thing, *lib.* 16 sub *init.* The circumstance of this judgment being to be executed on God's mountains is of importance; it may mean the destruction of Sennacherib's army near Jerusalem, and have a still farther view: compare Eze 39:4; and see Lowth on this place of Isaiah.

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ISAIAH 14: 26 This is the plan that is determined for the whole earth. This is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.

ISAIAH 14: 27 For the LORD of Armies has planned, and who can stop it? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?"

ISAIAH 14: 28 This burden was in the year that king Ahaz died.

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#### Verse 28

In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden - Uzziah had subdued the Philistines, 2Chr 26:6, 2Chr 26:7; but, taking advantage of the weak reign of Ahaz, they invaded Judea, and took, and held in possession, some cities in the southern part of the kingdom. On the death of Ahaz, Isaiah delivers this prophecy, threatening them with the destruction that Hezekiah, his son, and great-grandson of Uzziah, should bring upon them: which he effected; for "he smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof," 2Kgs 18:8. Uzziah, therefore, must be meant by the rod that smote them, and by the serpent from whom should spring the flying fiery serpent, Isa 14:29, that is, Hezekiah, a much more terrible enemy than even Uzziah had been.

The Targum renders the twenty-ninth verse in a singular way. "For, from the sons of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah; and his works among you shall be as the flying serpent."

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ISAIAH 14: 29 Don't rejoice, O Philistia, all of you, because the rod that struck you is broken; for out of the serpent's root an adder will emerge, and his fruit will be a fiery flying serpent.

ISAIAH 14: 30 The firstborn of the poor will eat, and the needy will lie down in safety; and I will kill your root with famine, and your remnant will be killed.

#### Verse 30

And the first-born of the poor, etc. - The Targum goes on applying all to the Messiah. "And the poor of the people shall he feed, and the humble shall dwell securely in his days: and he shall kill thy children with famine, and the remnant of thy people shall he slay."

I will kill "He will slay" - The Septuagint reads *ἡμιθ* hemith, to the third person, *ανελει*; and so the Chaldee. The Vulgate remedies the confusion of persons in the present text, by reading both the verbs in the first person.

ISAIAH 14: 31 Howl, gate! Cry, city! You are melted away, Philistia, all of you; for smoke comes out of the north, and there is no straggler in his ranks.

#### Verse 31

There shall come from the north a smoke "From the north cometh a smoke" - That is, a cloud of dust raised by the march of Hezekiah's army against Philistia; which lay to the south-west from Jerusalem. A great dust raised has, at a distance, the appearance of smoke: *Fumantes pulvere campi*; "The fields smoking with dust." - Virg. *Aen.* 11:908.

ISAIAH 14: 32 What will they answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion, and in her the afflicted of his people will take refuge.

#### Verse 32

The messengers of the nation "The ambassadors of the nations" - The Septuagint read *גויים* goyim, *εθνων*, plural; and so the Chaldee, and one MS. The ambassadors of the neighboring nations, that send to congratulate Hezekiah on his success, which in his answer he will ascribe to the protection of God. See 2Chr 32:23. Or, if *גוי* goi singular, the reading of the text, be preferred, the ambassadors sent by the Philistines to demand peace. - L.

The Lord hath founded Zion - Kimchi refers this to the state of Zion under Hezekiah, when the rest of the cities of Judea had been taken, and this only was left for a hope to the poor of God's people: and God so defended it that Rabshakeh could not prevail against it.

The true Church of God is a place of safety; for as all its members are devoted to God, and walk in his testimonies, so they are continually defended and supported by him. In the congregations of his people, God dispenses his light and salvation; hence his poor or humble ones expect in his ordinances the blessings they need.