
ISAIAH 52: 1 Awake, awake, put on your strength, Zion; put on your beautiful garments, Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Jerusalem, in manifest allusion to the strong figure employed in the close of the preceding chapter, is represented as fallen asleep in the dust, and in that helpless state bound by her enemies. The prophet, with all the ardor natural to one who had such joyful news to communicate, bids her awake, arise, put on her best attire, (holiness to the Lord), and ascend her lofty seat; and then he delivers the message he had in charge, a very consolatory part of which was, that "no more should enter into her the uncircumcised and the polluted," Isa 52:1-6. Awaking from her stupefaction, Jerusalem sees the messenger of such joyful tidings on the eminence from which he spied the coming deliverance. She expresses, in beautiful terms, her joy at the news, repeating with peculiar elegance the words of the crier, Isa 52:7. The rapturous intelligence, that Jehovah was returning to resume his residence on his holy mountain, immediately spreads to others on the watch, who all join in the glad acclamation, Isa 52:8; and, in the ardor of their joy, they call to the very ruins of Jerusalem to sing along with them, because Jehovah maketh bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth are about to see the salvation of Israel's God, Isa 52:9, Isa 52:10. To complete the deliverance, they are commanded to march in triumph out of Babylon, earnestly exhorted to have nothing to do with any of her abominations, and assured that Jehovah will guide them in all their way, Isa 52:11, Isa 52:12. The prophet then passes to the procuring cause of this great blessedness to the house of Israel in particular, and to the world in general, viz., the humiliation, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; a very celebrated and clear prophet which takes up the remainder of this and the whole of the following chapter.

Verse 1

There shall no more come into thee - For יבא yabo, "shall come," לבא lebo, "to come," is the reading of five of Kennicott's and two of De Rossi's MSS. This is the better reading, כי לא יוסיף לבא ki lo yosiph lebo, "There shall not add to come."

The uncircumcised and the unclean - Christians have turned many passages of the prophets against the Jews; and it is not to be wondered at, that in support of their obstinate and hopeless cause, they should press a prophecy into their service, and make it speak against the Christians. This Kimchi does in this place; for he says, by the uncircumcised, the Christians are meant; and by the unclean the Turks. The Christians are uncircumcised and the Turks, though circumcised, and using many ablutions, are unclean in their works.

ISAIAH 52: 2 Shake yourself from the dust! Arise, sit up, Jerusalem! Release yourself from the bonds of your neck, captive daughter of Zion!

Verse 2

Sit down, O Jerusalem "Ascend thy lofty seat, O Jerusalem" - The literal rendering here is, according to our English translation, "arise, sit;" on which a very learned person remarks: "So the old versions. But sitting is an expression of mourning in Scripture and the ancients; and doth not well agree with the rising just before." It does not indeed agree, according to our ideas; but, considered in an

oriental light, it is perfectly consistent. The common manner of sitting in the eastern countries is upon the ground or the floor with the legs crossed. The people of better condition have the floors of their chambers or divans covered with carpets for this purpose; and round the chamber broad couches, raised a little above the floor, spread with mattresses handsomely covered, which are called sofas. When sitting is spoken of as a posture of more than ordinary state, it is quite of a different kind; and means sitting on high, on a chair of state or throne called the musnud; for which a footstool was necessary, both in order that the person might raise himself up to it, and for supporting the legs when he was placed in it. "Chairs," says Sir John Chardin, "are never used in Persia, but at the coronation of their kings. The king is seated in a chair of gold set with jewels, three feet high. The chairs which are used by the people in the east are always so high as to make a footstool necessary. And this proves the propriety of the style of Scripture, which always joins the footstool to the throne." (Isa 66:1; Psa 105:1.) Voyages, tom. 9 p. 85, 12mo. Besides the six steps to Solomon's throne, there was a footstool of gold fastened to the seat, 2Chr 9:18, which would otherwise have been too high for the king to reach, or to sit on conveniently.

When Thetis comes to wait on Vulcan to request armor for her son, she is received with great respect, and seated on a silver-studded throne, a chair of ceremony, with a footstool: - Την μὲν ἐπειτα καθέισεν ἐπὶ θρόνου ἀργυροῦ καλοῦ, δαιδαλέου· ὑπο δὲ θροῶν ποσσὶν ἦεν.

Iliad 18:389. "High on a throne, with stars of silver graced,

And various artifice, the queen she placed;

A footstool at her feet."

Pope. Ὁ γὰρ θρόνος αὐτοῦ μόνον ἐλευθερίος ἐστὶ καθέδρα συν ὑποποδιῶ.

Athenaeus, 5:4. "A throne is nothing more than a handsome sort of chair with a footstool." - L.

ISAIAH 52: 3 For thus says the LORD, "You were sold for nothing; and you shall be redeemed without money."

ISAIAH 52: 4 For thus says the Lord GOD, "My people went down at the first into Egypt to live there: and the Assyrian has oppressed them without cause.

Verse 4

Thus saith the Lord God - יהוה אדני יהוה Adonai Jehovah; but Adonai is wanting in twelve of Kennicott's, five of De Rossi's, and two of my own MSS.; and by the Septuagint and Arabic. Some MSS. have יהוה אבות Jehovah tsebaoth, "Lord of hosts;" and others have יהוה אלהים Yehovah Elohim, "Lord God."

ISAIAH 52: 5 "Now therefore, what do I do here," says the LORD, "seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Those who rule over them mock," says the LORD, "and my name continually all the day is blasphemed.

Verse 5

They that rule over them "They that are lords over them" - For מְשֻׁלוֹ moshelo, singular, in the text, more than a hundred and twenty MSS. (De Rossi says, codices innumeri, "numberless copies") have מְשֻׁלוֹי moshelaiv plural, according to the Masoretical correction in the margin; which shows that the Masoretes often superstitiously retained apparent mistakes in the text, even when they had sufficient evidence to authorize the introduction of the true reading.

Make them to howl "Make their boast of it" - For יִהְיֶה לֵהוֹל yeheililu, "make them to howl," five MSS., (two ancient), have יִהְיֶה לְהוֹל yehalelu, "make their boast;" which is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrast, who renders it מִשְׁתַּבְּחִין mishtabbechin. Ulaloo is not only the cry itself, but also the name of the funeral song of the Irish. The Arabs have a cry very much resembling this.

ISAIAH 52: 6 Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore they shall know in that day that I am he who speaks; behold, it is I."

Verse 6

Therefore my people shall know - The word לֶכֶן lachen, occurring the second time in this verse, seems to be repeated by mistake. It has no force nor emphasis as a repetition; it only embarrasses the construction and the sense. It was not in the copies from which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate were translated; it was not in the copy of the Septuagint from which the Arabic was translated; but in the Aldine and Complutensian editions δια τουτο is repeated; probably so corrected, in order to make it conformable with the Hebrew text.

I am he that Moth speak "I am he, Jehovah, that promised" - For הוּא hu, the Bodleian MS. and another have יהוה, Jehovah; "For I am Jehovah that promised;" and another ancient MS. adds יהוה Jehovah after הוּא hu. The addition of Jehovah seems to be right in consequence of what was said in the preceding line, "My people shall know my name."

ISAIAH 52: 7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Verse 7

How beautiful - The watchmen discover afar off, on the mountains, the messenger bringing the expected and much-wished-for news of the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. They immediately spread the joyful tidings, Isa 52:8, and with a loud voice proclaim that Jehovah is returning to Zion, to resume his residence on his holy mountain, which for some time he seemed to have deserted. This is the literal sense of the place. "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the joyful messenger," is an expression highly poetical: for, how welcome is his arrival! how agreeable are the tidings which he brings!

Nahum, Nah 1:15, who is generally supposed to have lived after Isaiah, has manifestly taken from him this very pleasing image; but the imitation does not equal the beauty of the original: - "Behold upon the mountain the feet of the joyful messenger,

Of him that announceth peace!

Celebrate, O Judah, thy festivals; perform thy vows:

For no more shall pass through thee the wicked one;

He is utterly cut off."

But it must at the same time be observed that Isaiah's subject is infinitely more interesting and more sublime than that of Nahum; the latter denounces the destruction of the capital of the Assyrian empire, the most formidable enemy of Judah; the ideas of the former are in their full extent evangelical; and accordingly St. Paul has, with the utmost propriety, applied this passage to the preaching of the Gospel, Rom 10:15. The joyful tidings here to be proclaimed, "Thy God, O Zion, reigneth," are the same that John the Baptist, the messenger of Christ, and Christ himself, published: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

From the use made of this by our Lord and the apostles, we may rest assured that the preachers of the Gospel are particularly intended. Mountains are put for the whole land of Judea, where the Gospel was first preached. There seems to be an allusion to a battle fought, and the messengers coming to announce the victory, which was so decisive that a peace was the consequence, and the king's throne established in the land.

There appear to have been two sorts of messengers among the Jews: one sort always employed to bring evil tidings; the other to bring good. The names also and persons of these different messengers appear to have been well known; so that at a distance they could tell, from seeing the messenger, what sort of tidings he was bringing. See a case in point, 2Sam 18:19-27 (note). Ahimaaz and Cushi running to bring tidings of the defeat of Absalom and his rebel army. Ahimaaz is a Good man and bringeth Good tidings.

ISAIAH 52: 8 The voice of your watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD returns to Zion.

Verse 8

Thy watchmen lift up the voice "All thy watchmen lift up their voice" - There is a difficulty in the construction of this place which, I think, none of the ancient versions or modern interpreters have cleared up satisfactorily. Rendered word for word it stands thus: "The voice of thy watchmen: they lift up their voice." The sense of the first member, considered as elliptical, is variously supplied by various expositors; by none, as it seems to me, in any way that is easy and natural. I am persuaded there is a mistake in the present text, and that the true reading is כל צפירי kol tsophayich, all thy watchmen, instead of קול צפירי kol tsophayich, the voice of thy watchmen. The mistake was easy from the similitude in sound of the two letters כ caph and ק koph. And in one MS. the ק koph is upon a rasure. This correction perfectly rectifies the sense and the construction. - L.

They shall see eye to eye - May not this be applied to the prophets and apostles; the one predicting, and the other discovering in the prediction the truth of the prophecy. The meaning of both Testaments is best understood by bringing them face to face.

When the Lord shall bring again Zion "When Jehovah returneth to Zion" - So the Chaldee: כד יתיב נד יתיב שכינתיה לציון cad yethib shechinteh letsiyon, "when he shall place the shechinah in Zion." God is

considered as having deserted his people during the captivity; and at the restoration, as returning himself with them to Zion, his former habitation. See Psa 60:1; Isa 40:9, and note.

ISAIAH 52: 9 Break out into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

Verse 9

He hath redeemed Jerusalem "He hath redeemed Israel" - For the word ירושלים yerushalaim, which occurs the second time in this verse, MS. Bodleian and another read ישראל yisrael. It is upon a rasure in a third; and left unpointed at first, as suspected, in a fourth. It was an easy mistake, by the transcriber casting his eye on the line above: and the propriety of the correction, both in regard to sense and elegance, is evident.

ISAIAH 52: 10 The LORD has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

ISAIAH 52: 11 Depart, depart, go out from there, touch no unclean thing! Go out of the midst of her! Cleanse yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the LORD.

Verse 11

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence - The Prophet Jeremiah seems to have had his eye on this passage of Isaiah, and to have applied it to a subject directly opposite. It is here addressed by the prophet in a way of encouragement and exhortation to the Jews coming out of Babylon. Jeremiah has given it a different turn, and has thrown it out, as a reproach of the heathen upon the Jews when they were driven from Jerusalem into captivity: - "Depart; ye are polluted, depart; depart ye, forbear to touch.

Yea, they are fled, they are removed: they shall dwell here no more." Lam 4:15.

Of the metrical distribution of these lines, see the Prelim. Dissert., p. 58 note.

ISAIAH 52: 12 For you shall not go out in haste, neither shall you go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

ISAIAH 52: 13 Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

Verse 13

My servant shall deal prudently - ישכיל yaskil, shall prosper, or act prosperously. The subject of Isaiah's prophecy, from the fortieth chapter inclusive, has hitherto been, in general, the deliverance

of the people of God. This includes in it three distinct parts; which, however, have a close connection with one another; that is,

1. The deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon;
2. The deliverance of the Gentiles from their miserable state of ignorance and idolatry; and,
3. The deliverance of mankind from the captivity of sin and death.

These three subjects are subordinate to one another; and the two latter are shadowed out under the image of the former. They are covered by it as by a veil; which however is transparent, and suffers them to appear through it.

Cyrus is expressly named as the immediate agent of God in effecting the first deliverance. A greater person is spoken of as the Agent who is to effect the two latter deliverances, called the servant, the elect, of God, in whom his soul delighteth; Israel, in whom God will be glorified. Now these three subjects have a very near relation to one another; for as the Agent who was to effect the two latter deliverances, - that is, the Messiah, - was to be born a Jew, with particular limitations of time, family, and other circumstances; the first deliverance was necessary in the order of providence, and according to the determinate counsel of God, to the accomplishment of the two latter deliverances; and the second deliverance was necessary to the third, or rather was involved in it, and made an essential part of it. This being the case, Isaiah has not treated the three subjects as quite distinct and separate in a methodical and orderly manner, like a philosopher or a logician, but has taken them in their connective view. He has handled them as a prophet and a poet; he has allegorized the former, and under the image of it has shadowed out the two latter: he has thrown them all together, has mixed one with another, has passed from this to that with rapid transitions, and has painted the whole with the strongest and boldest imagery. The restoration of the Jews from captivity, the call of the Gentiles, the redemption by Messiah, have hitherto been handled interchangeably and alternately. Babylon has hitherto been kept pretty much in sight; at the same time, that strong intimations of something much greater have frequently been thrown in. But here Babylon is at once dropped, and I think hardly ever comes in sight again; unless perhaps in Isa 55:12, and Isa 57:14. The prophet's views are almost wholly engrossed by the superior part of his subject. He introduces the Messiah as appearing at first in the lowest state of humiliation, which he had just touched upon before, (Isa 50:5, Isa 50:6), and obviates the offense which would be occasioned by it, by declaring the important and necessary cause of it, and foreshowing the glory which should follow it.

This seems to me to be the nature and the true design of this part of Isaiah's prophecies; and this view of them seems to afford the best method of resolving difficulties, in which expositors are frequently engaged, being much divided between what is called the literal and the mystical sense, not very properly; for the mystical or spiritual sense is very often the most literal sense of all.

Abarbanel seems to have had an idea of this kind, as he is quoted by Vitrina on Isa 49:1, who thus represents his sentiments: Censet Abarbanel prophetam hic transitum facere a liberatione ex exilio Babylonico ad liberationem ex exilio Romano; et, quod hic animadversu dignum est, observat liberationem ex exilio Babylonico esse *אֹת וְרֵאִיָּה* oth veraayah, signum et argumentum liberationis futurae; atque adeo orationem prophetae de duabus hisce liberationibus in superioribus concionibus saepe inter se permisceri. Verba ejus: "Et propterea verba, sive res, in prophetic superiore inter se permixtae occurrunt; modo de liberatione Babylonica, modo de liberatione extrema accipiendae, ut orationis necessitas exigit." Nullum hic vitium, nisi quod redemptionem veram et spiritualem a Messia vero Jesu adductam, non agnoscat. "Abarbanel supposes that the prophet here makes a transition from the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity to the deliverance from the Roman

captivity; and (which is worthy of particular note) he observes that the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity is a sign and pledge of the future redemption; and that on this account it is we find in the preceding prophecies the circumstances of the two captivities intimately blended together. His words are the following: 'And, therefore, the words or subjects in the foregoing prophecy are very much intermixed; in one passage the redemption from the Babylonish captivity being treated of, in another the redemption from the general dispersion, as may be collected from the obvious import of the words.' No fault can be found with the above remark, except that the true and spiritual redemption procured by Jesus the Messiah is not acknowledged." - L.

ISAIAH 52: 14 Like as many were astonished at you (his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men),

Verse 14

As many were astonished at thee "As many were astonished at him" - For עליך aleicha read עליו alaiv. So the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate in a MS.; and so likewise two ancient MSS.

His visage was so marred more than any man - Most interpreters understand this of the indignities offered to our blessed Lord: but Kimchi gives it another turn, and says, "It means the Jewish people, whom are considered by most nations as having an appearance different from all the people of the earth. "Poor Jews! they have in general a very disagreeable look, partly affected, and partly through neglect of neatness and cleanliness. Most Christians think they carry the impress of their reprobation on every feature of their face. However this may be, it should never be forgotten that the greatest men that ever flourished as kings, judges, magistrates, lawgivers, heroes, and poets, were of Jewish extraction. Isaiah was a Jew; so was Paul, and so was Jesus of Nazareth.

ISAIAH 52: 15 so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand.

Verse 15

So shall he sprinkle many nations - I retain the common rendering, though I am by no means satisfied with it. "יזח yazzeh, frequent in the law, means only to sprinkle: but the water sprinkled is the accusative case; the thing on which has על al or אל el. Θ α υ μ α σ ο ν τ α ι , ό, makes the best apodosis. ינהג yenhag would do. ינהרו yinharu is used Isa 2:2; Jer 31:12; Jer 51:14, but is unlike. 'Kings shall shut,' etc., is good, but seems to want a first part." - Secker. Munster translates it, faciet loqui, (de se); and in his note thus explains it: יזח yazzeh proprie significat spargere et stillas disseminare; hic hero capitur pro loqui, et verbum disseminare. "יזח yazzeh properly signifies to sprinkle, and to scatter about drops; but it here means to speak, and to disseminate the word." This is pretty much as the Rabbins Kimchi and Sal. ben Belec explain it, referring to the expression of "dropping the word." But the same objection lies to this as to the common rendering; it ought to be יזח על גוים (יזח) yazzeh (debar) al goyim. Bishop Chandler, Defence, p. 148, says, "that to sprinkle is used for to surprise and astonish, as people are that have much water thrown upon them. And this sense is followed by the Septuagint." This is ingenious, but rather too refined. Dr. Duress conjectures that the true reading may be יזחו yechezu, they shall regard, which comes near to the θαυμασονται

of the Septuagint, who seem to give the best sense of any to this place. "I find in my papers the same conjecture which Dr. Durell made from *θαυμασοντα* in the Septuagint. And it may be added that *חזן* *chazah* is used to express 'looking on any thing with admiration,' Psa 11:7; Psa 17:15; Psa 27:4; Psa 63:2; Sol 6:13. It is particularly applied to 'looking on God,' Exo 24:11, and Job 19:26. Gisbert Cuper, in *Observ. lib. Job 2:1*, though treating on another subject, has some observations which show how nearly *ὄραω* and *θαυμαζω* are allied, which, with the peculiar sense of the verb *חזן* *chazah* above noted, add to the probability of *θαυμασσονται* being the version of *חזן* *yechezu* in the text: *οἱ δε νυ λαοι Παντες ες αυτον ὄρωσι*. Hesiod., *id est. cum veneratione quadam adminantur*. Hinc *ὄραω* et *θαυμαζω* junxit Themistius Or. 1: *Εἴτα παυσονται οἱ ανθρωποι προς σε μονον ὄρωνες, και σε μονον θαυμαζοντες*. Theophrastus in *Charact. c. 3*. *Ενθυμη ὡς αποβλεπουσιν εις σε οἱ ανθρωποι*. Hence the rendering of this verse seems to be - "So many nations shall look on him with admiration

Kings shall stop their mouths."

Dr. Jubb.

Does not sprinkling the nations refer to the conversion and baptism of the Gentiles? Many nations shall become proselytes to his religion.

Kings shall shut their mouths at him - His Gospel shall so prevail that all opposition shall be finally overcome; and kings and potentates shall be overwhelmed with confusion, and become speechless before the doctrines of his truth. When they hear these declared they shall attentively consider them, and their conviction of their truth shall be the consequence.

For that which had not been told them - The mystery of the Gospel so long concealed. See Rom 15:21; Rom 16:25.

Shall they see - With the eyes of their faith; God enlightening both organ and object.

And that which they had not heard - The redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; the conversion of the Gentiles, and making them one flock with the converted Jews. - Trapp