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JEREMIAH 6: 1 "Flee for safety, you children of Benjamin, out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and raise up a signal on Beth Haccherem; for evil looks out from the north, and a great destruction.

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Jeremiah, in the spirit of prophecy, seeing the Chaldeans on their march, bids his people set up the usual signals of distress, and spread the general alarm to betake themselves to flight, Jer 6:1. Then, by a beautiful allusion to the custom of shepherds moving their flocks to the richest pastures, Jerusalem is singled out as a place devoted to be eaten up or trodden down by the armies of the Chaldeans, who are called up against her, and whose ardor and impatience are so great that the soldiers, when they arrive in the evening, regret they have no more day, and desire to begin the attack without waiting for the light of the morning, Jer 6:2-5. God is then represented as animating and directing the besiegers against this guilty city, which sinned as incessantly as a fountain flows, Jer 6:6, Jer 6:7, although warned of the fatal consequence, Jer 6:8. He intimates also, by the gleanings of the grapes, that one invasion should carry away the remains of another, till their disobedience, hypocrisy, and other sins should end in their total overthrow, Jer 6:9-15. And to show that God is clear when he judgeth, he mentions his having in vain admonished and warned them, and calls upon the whole world to witness the equity of his proceedings, Jer 6:16-18, in punishing this perverse and hypocritical people, Jer 6:19, Jer 6:20, by the ministry of the cruel Chaldeans, Jer 6:21-23. Upon this a chorus of Jews is introduced expressing their fears and alarm, Jer 6:24, Jer 6:25; to which the prophet echoes a response full of sympathy and tenderness, Jer 6:26. The concluding verses, by metaphors taken from the process of refining gold and silver, represent all the methods hitherto used to amend them as wholly ineffectual, Jer 6:27-30.

#### Verse 1

O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee - As the invading armies are fast approaching, the prophet calls on the inhabitants of Jerusalem to sound an alarm, and collect all the people to arm themselves and go against the invaders. They are called the children of Benjamin, because Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin.

Tekoa - Was a city about twelve miles to the south of Jerusalem.

Beth-haccherem - Was the name of a small village situated on an eminence between Jerusalem and Tekoa. On this they were ordered to set up a beacon, or kindle a large fire, which might be seen at a distance, and give the people to understand that an enemy was entering the land.

Out of the north - From Babylon. The Scythians. - Dahler.

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JEREMIAH 6: 2 The comely and delicate one, the daughter of Zion, will I cut off.

JEREMIAH 6: 3 Shepherds with their flocks shall come to her; they shall pitch their tents against her all around; they shall feed everyone in his place."

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#### Verse 3

The shepherds with their flocks - The chiefs and their battalions. The invading army is about to spoil and waste all the fertile fields round about the city, while engaged in the siege.

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JEREMIAH 6: 4 "Prepare war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe to us! For the day declines, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

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Verse 4

Prepare ye war against her - The words of the invaders exciting each other to the assault, and impatient lest any time should be lost; lest the besieged should have time to strengthen themselves, or get in supplies.

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JEREMIAH 6: 5 Arise, and let us go up by night, and let us destroy her palaces."

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Verse 5

Arise, and let us go by night - Since we have lost the day, let us not lose the night; but, taking advantage of the darkness, let us make a powerful assault while they are under the impression of terror.

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JEREMIAH 6: 6 For the LORD of Armies said, "Cut down trees, and cast up a mound against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her.

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Verse 6

Hew ye down trees - To form machines.

And cast a mount - That may overlook the city, on which to place our engines.

This is the city to be visited - We are sure of success, for their God will deliver it into our hands, for it is full of oppression, and he has consigned it to destruction.

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JEREMIAH 6: 7 As a well produces its waters, so she produces her wickedness: violence and destruction is heard in her; before me continually is sickness and wounds.

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Verse 7

As a fountain casteth out her waters - The inhabitants are incessant in their acts of iniquity; they do nothing but sin.

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JEREMIAH 6: 8 Be instructed, Jerusalem, lest my soul be alienated from you; lest I make you a desolation, a land not inhabited.”

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Verse 8

Be thou instructed - Still there is respite: if they would even now return unto the Lord with all their heart, the advancing Chaldeans would be arrested on their march and turned back.

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JEREMIAH 6: 9 Thus says the LORD of Armies, “They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel like a vine. Turn again your hand as a grape gatherer into the baskets.”

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Verse 9

They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand - The Chaldeans are here exhorted to turn back and glean up the remnant of the inhabitants that were left after the capture of Jerusalem; for even that remnant did not profit by the Divine judgments that fell on the inhabitants at large.

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JEREMIAH 6: 10 To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they can't listen. Behold, the LORD's word has become a reproach to them. They have no delight in it.

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Verse 10

The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach - It is an object of derision; they despise it.

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JEREMIAH 6: 11 Therefore I am full of the wrath of the LORD. I am weary with holding in. “Pour it out on the children in the street, and on the assembly of young men together; for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him who is full of days.

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Verse 11

I am full of the fury of the Lord - God has given me a dreadful revelation of the judgments he intends to inflict: my soul is burdened with this prophecy. I have endeavored to suppress it; but I must pour it forth upon the children, on the young people, on husbands and wives, on the old and the super-annuated. All must partake in these judgments.

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JEREMIAH 6: 12 Their houses shall be turned to others, their fields and their wives together; for I will stretch out my hand on the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD.”

JEREMIAH 6: 13 "For from their least even to their greatest, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely.

JEREMIAH 6: 14 They have healed also the hurt of my people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace.

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Verse 14

They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly - Of the daughter is not in the text, and is here improperly added: it is, however, in some MSS.

Peace, peace - Ye shall have prosperity - when there was none, and when God had determined that there should be none. Here the prophets prophesied falsely; and the people continued in sin, being deceived by the priests and the prophets.

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JEREMIAH 6: 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I visit them, they shall be cast down," says the LORD.

JEREMIAH 6: 16 Thus says the LORD, "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, 'Where is the good way?' and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

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Verse 16

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see - Let us observe the metaphor. A traveler is going to a particular city; he comes to a place where the road divides into several paths, he is afraid of going astray; he stops short, - endeavors to find out the right path: he cannot fix his choice. At last he sees another traveler; he inquires of him, gets proper directions - proceeds on his journey - arrives at the desired place - and reposes after his fatigue. There is an excellent sermon on these words in the works of our first poet, Geoffrey Chaucer; it is among the Canterbury Tales, and is called Chaucer's Tale. The text, I find, was read by him as it appears in my old MS. Bible: - Standith upon weies and seeth, and asketh of the olde pathes; What is the good weie? and goth in it, and gee schul fynden refresching to your soulis. The soul needs rest; it can only find this by walking in the good way. The good way is that which has been trodden by the saints from the beginning: it is the old way, the way of faith and holiness. Believe, Love, Obey; be holy, and be happy. This is the way; let us inquire for it, and walk in it. But these bad people said, We will not walk in it. Then they took another way, walked over the precipice, and fell into the bottomless pit; where, instead of rest, they find: - - a fiery deluge, fed

With ever-burning sulfur, unconsumed.

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JEREMIAH 6: 17 I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen!'

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Verse 17

I set watchmen - I have sent prophets to warn you.

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JEREMIAH 6: 18 Therefore hear, you nations, and know, congregation, what is among them.

JEREMIAH 6: 19 Hear, earth! Behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not listened to my words; and as for my law, they have rejected it.

JEREMIAH 6: 20 To what purpose comes there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing to me.”

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Verse 20

Incense from Sheba - Sheba was in Arabian famous for the best incense. It was situated towards the southern extremity of the peninsula of Arabia; and was, in respect of Judea, a far country.

And the sweet cane from a far country - The calamus aromaticus, which, when dried and pulverized, yields a very fine aromatic smell; see on Isa 43:24 (note). This was employed in making the holy anointing oil. See Exo 30:23.

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JEREMIAH 6: 21 Therefore thus says the LORD, “Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people. The fathers and the sons together shall stumble against them. The neighbour and his friend shall perish.”

JEREMIAH 6: 22 Thus says the LORD, “Behold, a people comes from the north country. A great nation shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth.

JEREMIAH 6: 23 They take hold of bow and spear. They are cruel, and have no mercy. Their voice roars like the sea, and they ride on horses, everyone set in array, as a man to the battle, against you, daughter of Zion.”

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Verse 23

They shall lay hold on bow and spear - Still pointing out the Chaldeans: or according to Dahler, the Scythians, who had before their invasion of Palestine overrun many parts of Asia, and had spread consternation wherever their name was heard.

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JEREMIAH 6: 24 We have heard its report; our hands become feeble: anguish has taken hold of us, and pains as of a woman in labour.

JEREMIAH 6: 25 Don't go out into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy and terror, are on every side.

JEREMIAH 6: 26 Daughter of my people, clothe yourself with sackcloth, and wallow in ashes! Mourn, as for an only son, most bitter lamentation; for the destroyer shall suddenly come on us.

JEREMIAH 6: 27 "I have made you a tester of metals and a fortress among my people; that you may know and try their way.

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Verse 27

I have set thee for a tower and a fortress - Dr. Blayney translates, I have appointed thee to make an assay among my people. The words refer to the office of an assayer of silver and gold; and the manner of assaying here intended is by the cupel, a flat broad iron ring filled with the ashes of burnt bones. To separate the alloy from the silver they add a portion of lead; and when all is fused together, and brought into a state of ebullition, the cupel absorbs the lead, and with it the dross or alloy, and the silver is left pure and motionless on the top of the cupel. The people are here represented under the notion of alloyed silver. They are full of impurities; and they are put into the hands of the prophet, the assayer, to be purified. The bellows are placed, the fire is lighted up, but all to no purpose: so intensely commixed is the alloy with the silver, that it can not be separated. The nozzle of the bellows is even melted with the intensity of the fire used to effect the refinement; and the lead is carried off by the action of the heat; and the assayer melteth in vain, for the alloy still continues in union with the metal. The assayer gives up the process, - will not institute one more expensive or tedious - pronounces the mass unfit to be coined, and denominates it reprobate silver, Jer 6:30. Thus, the evil habits and dispositions of the Israelites were so ingrained that they would not yield to either the ordinary or extraordinary means of salvation. God pronounces them reprobate silver, - not sterling, - full of alloy; - having neither the image nor the superscription of the Great King either on their hearts or on their conduct. Thus he gave them up as incorrigible, and their adversaries prevailed against them. This should be a warning to other nations, and indeed to the Christian Church; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare these.

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JEREMIAH 6: 28 They are all grievous rebels, going about with slanders; they are brass and iron: they all of them deal corruptly.

JEREMIAH 6: 29 The bellows blow fiercely; the lead is consumed of the fire: in vain do they go on refining; for the wicked are not plucked away.

JEREMIAH 6: 30 Men will call them rejected silver, because the LORD has rejected them."

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