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JEREMIAH 22: 1 Thus said the LORD: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word,

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This section of prophecy, extending to the end of the eighth verse of the next chapter, is addressed to the king of Judah and his people. It enjoins on them the practice of justice and equity, as they would hope to prosper, Jer 22:14; but threatens them, in case of disobedience, with utter destruction, Jer 22:5-9. The captivity of Shallum, the son of Josiah, is declared to be irreversible, Jer 22:10-12; and the miserable and unlamented end of Jeconiah, contemptuously called Coniah, is foretold, Jer 22:13-19. His family is threatened with the like captivity, and his seed declared to be forever excluded from the throne, Jer 22:20-30.

Verse 1

Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word - This is supposed by Dahler to have been published in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah.

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JEREMIAH 22: 2 Say, Hear the LORD's word, king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you, and your servants, and your people who enter in by these gates.

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Verse 2

O king of Judah - thou, and thy servants - His ministers are here addressed, as chiefly governing the nation; and who had counselled Zedekiah to rebel.

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JEREMIAH 22: 3 Thus says the LORD: Execute justice and righteousness, and deliver him who is robbed out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence, to the foreigner, the fatherless, nor the widow; neither shed innocent blood in this place.

JEREMIAH 22: 4 For if you do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

JEREMIAH 22: 5 But if you will not hear these words, I swear by myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation.

JEREMIAH 22: 6 For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah: You are Gilead to me, the head of Lebanon. Yet surely I will make you a wilderness, cities which are not inhabited.

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Verse 6

Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon - Perhaps in allusion, says Dahler, to the oaks of Gilead, and the cedars of Mount Lebanon, of which the palace was constructed. Lebanon was the highest mountain in Israel, and Gilead the richest and most fertile part of the country; and were,

therefore, proper emblems of the reigning family. Though thou art the richest and most powerful, I, who raised thee up, can bring thee down and make thee a wilderness.

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JEREMIAH 22: 7 I will prepare destroyers against you, everyone with his weapons; and they shall cut down your choice cedars, and cast them into the fire.

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Verse 7

They shall cut down thy choice cedars - The destruction of the country is expressed under the symbol of the destruction of a fine forest; a multitude of fellers come against it, each with his axe; and, there being no resistance, every tree is soon felled to the earth. "These destroyers," God says, "I have prepared, *קִדְּשֵׁתִי* *kiddashti*, I have sanctified - consecrated, to this work. They have their commission from me."

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JEREMIAH 22: 8 Many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Why has the LORD done thus to this great city?

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Verse 8

Many nations shall pass - These words seem borrowed from Deu 29:22, etc.

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JEREMIAH 22: 9 Then they shall answer, Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

JEREMIAH 22: 10 Don't weep for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep bitterly for him who goes away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

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Verse 10

Weep ye not for the dead - Josiah, dead in consequence of the wound he had received at Megiddo, in a battle with Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt; but he died in peace with God.

But weep sore for him that goeth away - Namely, Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, called below Shallum, whom Pharaoh-necho had carried captive into Egypt from which it was prophesied he should never return, 2Kgs 23:30-34. He was called Shallum before he ascended the throne, and Jehoahaz afterwards; so his brother Eliakim changed his name to Jehoiakim, and Mattaniah to Zedekiah.

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JEREMIAH 22: 11 For thus says the LORD touching Shallum the son of Josiah, king of Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, and who went out of this place: He shall not return there any more.

JEREMIAH 22: 12 But in the place where they have led him captive, there shall he die, and he shall see this land no more.

JEREMIAH 22: 13 Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his rooms by injustice; who uses his neighbour's service without wages, and doesn't give him his hire;

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#### Verse 13

Wo unto him that buildeth his house - These evils, charged against Jehoiakim, are nowhere else circumstantially related. We learn from 2Kgs 23:35-37, that he taxed his subjects heavily, to give to Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt: "He exacted the silver and gold of the people of the land, and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." The mode of taxation is here intimated; he took the wages of the hirelings, and caused the people to work without wages in his own buildings, etc.

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JEREMIAH 22: 14 who says, I will build me a wide house and spacious rooms, and cuts him out windows; and it is ceiling with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

JEREMIAH 22: 15 Shall you reign, because you strive to excel in cedar? Didn't your father eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness? then it was well with him.

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#### Verse 15

Shalt thou reign, etc - Dost thou think thou art a great king, because thou dwellest in a splendid palace?

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JEREMIAH 22: 16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Wasn't this to know me? says the LORD.

JEREMIAH 22: 17 But your eyes and your heart are not but for your covetousness, and for shedding innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.

JEREMIAH 22: 18 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! They shall not lament for him, saying Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!

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#### Verse 18

They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! - These words were no doubt the burden of some funeral dirge. Alas! a brother, who was our lord or governor, is gone. Alas, our sister! his Queen, who has lost her glory in losing her husband. הודא hodah is feminine, and must refer to the glory of the queen.

The mournings in the east, and lamentations for the dead, are loud, vehement, and distressing. For a child or a parent grief is expressed in a variety of impassioned sentences, each ending with a burden like that in the text, "Ah my child!" "Ah my mother!" as the prophet in this place: הוי אחי hoi achi, "Ah my brother!" הוי אחות hoi achoth, "Ah sister!" הוי אדון hoi adon, "Ah lord!" הוי הודא hoi hodah "Ah the glory." Mr. Ward, in his Manners and Customs of the Hindoos, gives two examples of lamentation; one of a mother for the death of her son, one of a daughter for her departed mother.

"When a woman," says he, "is overwhelmed with grief for the death of her child, she utters her grief in some such language as the following: -

Ah, my Hureedas, where is he gone? - 'Ah my child, my child!'

My golden image, Hureedas, who has taken? - 'Ah my child, my child!'

I nourished and reared him, where is he gone? - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Take me with thee. - 'Ah my child, my child!'

He played round me like a golden top. - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Like his face I never saw one. - 'Ah my child, my child!'

The infant continually cried, Ma Ma! - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Ah my child, crying, Ma! come into my lap. - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Who shall now drink milk? - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Who shall now stay in my lap? - 'Ah my child, my child!'

Our support is gone! - 'Ah my child, my child!' "The lamentations for a mother are in some such strains as these: -

Mother! where is she gone? - 'Ah my mother, my mother!'

You are gone, but what have you left for me? - 'Ah my mother, my mother!'

Whom shall I now call mother, mother? - 'Ah my mother, my mother!'

Where shall I find such a mother? - 'Ah my mother, my mother!'"

From the above we may conclude that the funeral lamentations, to which the prophet refers, generally ended in this way, in each of the verses or interrogatories.

There is another intimation of this ancient and universal custom in 1Kgs 13:30, where the old prophet, who had deceived the man of God, and who was afterwards slain by a lion, is represented as mourning over him, and saying, הוי הוי אחי, "Alas, my brother!" this being the burden of the lamentation which he had used on this occasion. Similar instances may be seen in other places, Jer 30:7; Eze 6:11; Joe 1:15; and particularly Amo 5:16, Amo 5:17, and Rev 18:10-19.

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JEREMIAH 22: 19 He shall be buried with the burial of a donkey, drawn and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

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Verse 19

With the burial of an ass - Cast out, and left unburied, or buried without any funeral solemnities, and without such lamentations as the above.

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JEREMIAH 22: 20 Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up your voice in Bashan, and cry from Abarim; for all your lovers are destroyed.

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Verse 20

Go up to Lebanon - Probably Anti-Libanus, which, together with Bashan and Abarim, which we here translate passages, were on the way by which the captives should be led out of their own country.

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JEREMIAH 22: 21 I spoke to you in your prosperity; but you said, I will not hear. This has been your way from your youth, that you didn't obey my voice.

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Verse 21

I spake unto thee in thy prosperity - In all states and circumstances I warned thee by my prophets; and thou wilt only be ashamed of thy conduct when thou shalt be stripped of all thy excellencies, and reduced to poverty and disgrace, Jer 22:22.

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JEREMIAH 22: 22 The wind shall feed all your shepherds, and your lovers shall go into captivity: surely then you will be ashamed and confounded for all your wickedness.

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Verse 22

The wind shall eat up all thy pastors - A blast from God's mouth shall carry off thy kings, princes, prophets, and priests.

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JEREMIAH 22: 23 Inhabitant of Lebanon, who makes your nest in the cedars, how greatly to be pitied you will be when pangs come on you, the pain as of a woman in travail!

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Verse 23

How gracious shalt thou be - A strong irony.

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JEREMIAH 22: 24 As I live, says the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet on my right hand, yet would I pluck you there;

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Verse 24

Though Coniah - Called Jeconiah, probably on ascending the throne. See on Jer 22:10 (note).

The signet upon my right hand - The most precious seal, ring, or armlet. Though dearer to me than the most splendid gem to its possessor.

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JEREMIAH 22: 25 and I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of them of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

JEREMIAH 22: 26 I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country, where you were not born; and there you will die.

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Verse 26

I will cast thee out, and thy mother - See all this fulfilled, 2Kgs 24:12, 2Kgs 24:13. All were carried by Nebuchadnezzar into captivity together.

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JEREMIAH 22: 27 But to the land t which their soul longs to return, there shall they not return.

JEREMIAH 22: 28 Is this man Coniah a despised broken vessel? is he a vessel in which no one delights? why are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into the land which they don't know?

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Verse 28

Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? - These are probably the exclamations of the people, when they heard those solemn denunciations against their king and their country.

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JEREMIAH 22: 29 O earth, earth, earth, hear the LORD's word.

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Verse 29

O earth - These are the words of the prophet in reply: O land! unhappy land! desolated land! Hear the judgment of the Lord!

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JEREMIAH 22: 30 Thus says the LORD, Write you this man childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days; for no more shall a man of his seed prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling in Judah.

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Verse 30

Write ye this man childless - Though he had seven sons, 1Chr 3:17, yet having no successor, he is to be entered on the genealogical tables as one without children for none of his posterity ever sat on the throne of David.