

# CHAPTER 28

## INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY 28

In this chapter Moses enlarges on the blessings and the curses which belong, the one to the doers, the other to the transgressors of the law; the blessings, (<sup>(REXI)</sup>Deuteronomy 28:1-14); the curses, some of which concern individual persons, others the whole nation and body of people, and that both under the former and present dispensations, and which had their fulfilment in their former captivities, and more especially in their present dispersion, (<sup>(RXIS)</sup>Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

**Ver. 1.** *And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God,* etc.] In his law, and by his prophets:

*to observe [and] to do all his commandments, which I command thee this day;* for without observing them to do them, hearing them would be to little purpose, and they were all of them to be observed and done, the lesser and weightier matters of the law as they were commanded by Moses in the name of the Lord, and as they would be taught, explained, and enforced by the prophets:

*that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:* as they were in the times of David and Solomon; (see Gill on <sup>(RXIX)</sup>Deuteronomy 26:19”).

**Ver. 2.** *And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee,* etc.] After mentioned, which should come upon them from God from heaven, by the direction of his providence, and that freely and plentifully, and beyond their expectations and deserts, and continue with them:

*if thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God;* obedience to the law being the condition of their coming and continuance; for only temporal blessings in the land of Canaan are here intended, as follow.

**Ver. 3.** *Blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the city,* etc.] Not only in the city of Jerusalem, where the temple would be built, and there be blessed with the service, worship, and ordinances of God, but in all other cities of the land;

where they should dwell in title, large, and spacious houses, and their cities should be walled and fenced, and be very populous; yet should enjoy health, and have plenty of all sorts of provisions brought unto them, as well as prosper in all kinds of merchandise there, as Aben Ezra notes:

*and blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the field;* in the country villages, and in all rural employments, in sowing and planting, as the same writer observes; in all kinds of husbandry, in the culture of the fields for corn, and of vineyards and oliveyards; all should prosper and succeed, and bring forth fruit abundantly.

**Ver. 4.** *Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body,* etc.] Their children, of which they should have many, and these live; be healthful, thrive, and arrive to manhood, and increase and perpetuate their families. Grotius thinks this was eminently fulfilled in Mary, the mother of our Lord; (see  ~~Luke~~ Luke 1:42);

*and the fruit of thy ground;* of their gardens, orchards, and fields; grass for the cattle, and the wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates for the use of men:

*and the fruit of thy cattle;* which being distinguished from oxen and sheep in the following clause, must be understood of camels and asses, which were used for the carriage both of persons and burdens, and were very serviceable, and were a considerable part of their substance in those countries; (see  ~~Job~~ Job 1:3);

*the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep;* of their cows and oxen, and of their sheep and goats, which were very increasing creatures, and in the increase of which much of their outward happiness lay; (see  ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 144:13,14).

**Ver. 5.** *Blessed [shall be] thy basket,* etc.] Which the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem restrain to the basket of firstfruits, and the cake of the first of their dough; but it intends any and every vessel in which they put their provisions for present use, and that that should never be empty of them, and that they should always have a sufficiency:

*and thy store;* what remained, and was laid up in their barns, cellars, and storehouses, for future use, or in proper places for seed.

**Ver. 6.** *Blessed [shalt] thou [be] when thou comest in, and blessed [shalt] thou [be] when thou goest out.*] In all their business and employments of life whether within doors or without; in the administration of every office, whether more public or private; and in all their journeys going out and coming home; and particularly when they went out to war, and returned, all should be attended with success.

**Ver. 7.** *The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face,* etc.] As the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, and Ammonites were, especially in the times of David:

*they shall come out against thee one way:* in a body, all together, in large numbers, marching in great order, to give them battle:

*and flee before thee seven ways;* be entirely routed, and flee some one way, and some another, even every way they could take to make their escape. The phrase is expressive of an entire victory, and of a complete rout and dispersion of an enemy.

**Ver. 8.** *The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses,* etc.] Barns, granaries, and cellar, where their corn, wine, and oil, were laid up; by preserving the corn from being devoured by vermin, and the casks of wine and oil from bursting and running out:

*and in all thou settest thine hand unto;* in all their manufactures, occupations, and trades, in which they were employed, and in the culture of their vines, olives, and other fruit trees:

*and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee;* with health and long life in it, and with an abundance of all good things, it being a land flowing with milk and honey.

**Ver. 9.** *And the Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself,* etc.] Having separated them from all others, for his service, honour, and glory, should continue them as such, and settle them in the land, and confirm all their privileges, natural, civil, and religious. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord shall establish thee, etc.”

he that brought them out of Egypt, through the Red sea and wilderness, to the land of Canaan:

*as he hath sworn unto thee:* and to their fathers; (see <sup><6712></sup>Deuteronomy 7:12,13);

*if thou shall keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways;* by which tenure they held the land of Canaan, and their settlement and continuance in it, and enjoyment of all the good things thereof; (see <sup><3019></sup>Isaiah 1:19,20).

**Ver. 10.** *And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord,* etc.] Called his children, his people, his portion, and his inheritance; and that they are his, and he is theirs, by the care he takes of them, the provision he makes for them, and the protection they have from him:

*and they shall be afraid of thee;* as not only the Canaanites were, but all other nations; (see <sup><6125></sup>Deuteronomy 11:25).

**Ver. 11.** *And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods,* etc.] In all temporal good things, give them an affluence of them, even all things richly to enjoy; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord shall, etc.”

*in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground:* increase their children, cattle, and substance, as before, (<sup><6304></sup>Deuteronomy 28:4);

*in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee;* the land of Canaan, often thus described.

**Ver. 12.** *The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure,* etc.] The Lord has his treasures of snow and of hail, and of wind, (<sup><8822></sup>Job 38:22) (<sup><6437></sup>Psalms 135:7); but here his good treasure, as appears by what follows, is his treasure of rain. In the Targum of Jonathan it is said,

“there are four keys in the hand of the Lord of the whole world, which he does not deliver into the hands of any prince; the keys of life, and of the grave, and of food, and of rain:”

*the heaven, to give the rain unto thy land in its season;* that is, he will open the heaven, where his good treasure of rain is laid up, and bring it forth or, the land of Canaan for the enriching of it; or will open the windows thereof, and pour down the blessing; (see <sup><3010></sup>Malachi 3:10); and that at the

proper time, both in autumn and spring, the one is called the former, and the other the latter rain; the one was in Marchesvan, or October, and the other in Nisan, or March, as the Targum of Jonathan; the former rain for the fitting the earth for seed, or for watering it when sown, and the latter for the plumping of it before harvest:

*and to bless all the work of thine hand*; in agriculture, for without the blessing of rain, all the labour of the husbandman would be to little purpose:

*and thou shall lend unto many nations, and thou shall not borrow*; (see Gill on “<sup>4516</sup>Deuteronomy 15:16”). The connection of these words with what goes before may lead to observe this sense of them, that they should furnish other countries with corn, and not need any of theirs; (see <sup>3277</sup>Ezekiel 27:17).

**Ver. 13.** *And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail*, etc.] Give them dominion over others, and not make them subject to them; the head signifies rulers and governors, and the tail the common people that are subjects; or the one such that are honourable and in high esteem, and the other such that are mean and base; (see <sup>2394</sup>Isaiah 9:14,15); the Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord shall make thee, etc.”

*and thou shalt be above only, and thou shall not be beneath*; which explains what is meant by head and tail, being uppermost and lowermost, as the head is the upper part, and the tail the lower part of a creature; the one is more honourable, the other vile: the sense is, that they should be superior to other people in honour and dignity, and not below them, or vassals to them:

*if that thou hearken to the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day to observe and to do [them]*; which is the condition on which all this happiness depended.

**Ver. 14.** *And thou shall not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day*, etc.] Depart from them as a rule to walk by, turn out from them as a path to walk in, neglect and disobey them, and go into practices contrary to them: turning

*[to] the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them;* which to do was to break the first and principal table of the law, than which nothing was more abominable and provoking to God.

**Ver. 15.** *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God,* etc.] As directed, exhorted, and encouraged to, (<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:1), etc.

*to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day;* both moral and ceremonial:

*that all these curses shall come upon thee;* from the hand of God, certainly, suddenly, and unawares:

*and overtake thee;* pursuing after thee, will come up to thee, and seize upon thee, though they may seem to move slowly; (see <sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Zechariah 5:3,4); namely, the curses which follow. Manasseh Ben Israel <sup>f495</sup> divides them into two parts, the first from hence to (<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:45); which respects the destruction of the first temple, and the things that went before or related to that; and the second from thence to the end of the chapter, which he thinks refers to the destruction of the second temple, and their present case and circumstances; and it must be owned that for the most part the distinction may seem to hold good; what is prophesied of that should befall the Jews for their disobedience being more remarkably and distinctly fulfilled in the one than in the other; yet there are things in the whole which respect both, or that were fulfilled, some under one dispensation, and some under another, and some that were fulfilled in both; but chiefly and more manifestly at and since their dispersion by the Romans.

**Ver. 16.** *Cursed [shalt] thou [be] in the city, and cursed [shalt] thou [be] in the field.*] In (<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:16-19) the curses are delivered out in form, as the reverse of the blessings in (<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:3-6); and by observing what the blessings mean, the sense of the curses may easily be understood, the one being directly opposite to the other. (See Gill on "<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:3").

**Ver. 17.** *Cursed [shall be] thy basket and thy store.*] (See Gill on "<sup><del>EXB</del></sup>Deuteronomy 28:5, 16").

**Ver. 18.** *Cursed [shall be] the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*] (See Gill on “<sup>(1804)</sup>Deuteronomy 28:4, 16”).

**Ver. 19.** *Cursed [shalt] thou [be] when thou comest in, and cursed [shalt] thou [be] when thou goest out.*] (See Gill on “<sup>(1806)</sup>Deuteronomy 28:6, 16”).

**Ver. 20.** *The Lord shall send upon thee cursing*, etc.] Which is either a general word for all that follows, or rather, since that had been expressed before in various instances, this may denote some particular judgment. Jarchi interprets it of penury, of want of all good things, extreme poverty, so as to be reduced to the utmost necessity, and as to stand in need of the common comforts and supports of life, and even to have their blessings and mercies turned into curses; the consequence of which must needs be

*vexation*; trouble, distress, and anguish of spirit:

*and rebuke*; this may well be considered as a rebuke and correction in Providence for sins committed, to awaken to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and to repentance for them:

*in all that thou settest thine hand to do*; nothing done should prosper, to relieve them under their pressing wants, a curse attending all their efforts, and so sad disappointment follows; and all as a just rebuke for their many sins: and this would be their case more or less,

*until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly*; through famine, and want of the common necessities of life; as at the sieges of Samaria and Jerusalem, by the kings of Syria, Assyria, and Babylon:

*because of the wickedness of thy doings, because thou hast forsaken me*; their several immoralities and impieties, and particularly their idolatry, which was a forsaking the worship of the true God, and following idols; an iniquity to be punished by the judge, and of all things the most provoking to the Lord.

**Ver. 21.** *The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee*, etc.] Not only to come upon them; but to continue with them:

*until he have consumed thee from off the land whither thou goest to possess it*; which shows that this respects not some particular seasons, when the pestilence came and continued awhile, and then ceased, as in the times of David; but when it became more general, and issued with other

judgments in the utter consumption of them, as at the destruction of Jerusalem, both by the Babylonians and the Romans; at what times the pestilence raged and remained, until by that and other sore judgments the land was wholly depopulated.

**Ver. 22.** *The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption*, etc.] An emaciation of their bodies, either through famine or wasting diseases, whereby the fluids are washed off, and men are reduced to skin and bones:

*and with a fever*; a hot burning disease, which dries up the radical moisture, consumes it, and so threatens with death; of which there are various sorts, and some very pestilential and mortal Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it of a fire in the face, by which they seem to mean what is called St. Anthony's fire:

*and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning*; either in the inward parts, as an inflammation of the lungs; or in the outward parts, as carbuncles, burning ulcers, and the like:

*and with the sword*; in the margin it is, "with drought"; so Aben Ezra interprets the word, which seems better to suit with what it is in company with; and designs either drought in human bodies, occasioned by fevers, inflammations, and extreme burnings; or in the earth, through the force of the sun, and want of rain, which render the earth barren and unfruitful, and so cause a famine:

*and with blasting and with mildew*; whereby the corn that is sown, and springs up, comes to nothing, being blasted by east winds, or turns pale and yellow by the mildew, and so withers away; the consequence of which is want of food, and so destruction and ruin; (see <sup><300D></sup>Amos 4:9);

*and they shall pursue thee until thou perish*; follow hard after them, and come so close one after another upon them, until they are utterly destroyed.

**Ver. 23.** *And the heaven that [is] over thy head shall be brass*, etc.] Or like brass, not for its clearness, brightness, and splendour, or for its being spread out like a molten looking glass which was of brass, (<sup><837B></sup>Job 37:18); but for its dryness and hardness, no moisture being in it, or passing through it; no showers of rain nor dew being let down from it:

*and the earth that is under thee [shall be] iron*; or like iron, hard and impenetrable, into which the plough and spade will not enter; nor anything spring out of it, for want of rain and dew to moisten and soften it. The same is said in (<sup><1839></sup>Leviticus 26:19); only there is an inversion of the figures; there the heaven is said to be as iron, and the earth like brass, but signify the same thing.

**Ver. 24.** *The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust*, etc.] That is, instead of showers of rain in their season, to water, refresh, and enrich the earth, and make it fruitful; and for want of them, and through the heat of the sun, being dried and parched, and its clods crumbled into dust, this should be raised up into the air by the force of winds, and let down again in showers of dust; whereby the few herbs, plants, or green trees on it would be utterly destroyed: and so the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of the Lord's sending a wind that should raise the dust and earth upon the herbs of their fields. Such ploughing winds, that cast up the earth and sand, and dust, into the air, whereby men and cattle are sometimes covered, are frequent in the eastern countries; of which (see Gill on "Jonah 4:8");

*from heaven shall it come down upon thee until thou be destroyed*; that is, from the air, up to which the dust is carried by the wind, and then let fall in vast quantities, like showers, which are very destructive.

**Ver. 25.** *The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten for thine enemies*, etc.] And by them, as they sometimes were by the Philistines and others, before their utter destruction, when they sinned against the Lord; and by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans:

*thou shall go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them*; march out against them in a body, promising themselves victory, but be utterly routed; so that they shall flee every way they can for their safety; (see <sup><1817></sup>Deuteronomy 28:7);

*and shall be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth*; this shows that Manasseh's case (<sup><1201></sup>2 Kings 21:1-18), observed (<sup><1815></sup>Deuteronomy 28:15); will not strictly and entirely hold good, nor is there any necessity to adhere closely to it; it is enough that the things threatened and prophesied of were at one time or another fulfilled in these people; for neither the ten tribes, when taken captive by Shalmaneser, were carried into all the kingdoms of the earth, only to some particular places mentioned in (<sup><1206></sup>2 Kings 17:6); nor the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar, who were carried by him to

Babylon, and returned from thence again at the end of seventy years; but this was exactly fulfilled at their last destruction by the Romans, when they were sent by them into various countries, and have been ever since scattered about in each of the nations of the world. And yet it must be owned that Strabo<sup>f496</sup>, who wrote before the last destruction of them, affirms, that it was not easy to find any place in the world which had not received them, and was not occupied by them.

**Ver. 26.** *And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth*, etc.] Which was always reckoned a very grievous calamity, have no other burial than in the bowels of beasts and birds; and was the case of many of the Jews in the Antiochian persecution, (<sup><BIB></sup>Psalm 79:2); and in a treatise of theirs<sup>f497</sup>, which relates their many afflictions and sufferings in their present captivity, speaking of a persecution of them in Spain, in the Jewish year 5172, it is reported, how that those that fled to avoid punishment were killed in the fields, where their carcasses lying unburied became a prey to beasts:

*and no man shall fray [them] away*; the fowls and the beasts; none of their friends being left to do it, and their enemies would not show so much respect to them, and care of them.

**Ver. 27.** *The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt*, etc.] Which some understand of the leprosy, Of that sort of it called “elephantiasis”, frequent among the Egyptians; (see Gill on “<sup><BIB></sup>Leviticus 13:2”). Thevenot<sup>f498</sup> relates, that when the time of the increase of the Nile expires, the Egyptians are attended with sharp prickings in their skin like needles. So Vansleb says<sup>f499</sup>,

“the waters of the Nile cause an itch in the skin, which troubles such as drink of them when the river increases. This itch is very small, and appears first about the arms, next upon the stomach, and spreads all about the body, which causes a grievous pain; and not only the river water, but that out of the cisterns drank of, brings it, and it lasts about six weeks.”

Though some take this botch to be the botch and blain which the Egyptians were plagued with for refusing to let Israel go, (<sup><BIB></sup>Exodus 9:9,10);

*and with the emerods*; or haemorrhoids, the piles, a disease of the fundament, attended sometimes with ulcers there; (see <sup><BIB></sup>1 Samuel 5:9);

*and with the scab and with the itch*: the one moist, the other dry, and both very distressing:

*whereof thou canst not be healed*; by any art of men; which shows these to be uncommon ones, and from the immediate hand of God.

**Ver. 28.** *The Lord shall smite thee with madness*, etc.] At the calamities befallen them, and through the force of diseases on them:

*and blindness*; not of body, but of mind; with judicial blindness and hardness of heart:

*and astonishment of heart*; at the miserable condition they and their families should be in.

**Ver. 29.** *And thou shalt grope at noon day as the blind gropeth in darkness*, etc.] That is, being in darkness through the loss of their sight; otherwise the darkness and the light are alike to them, and they grope in the one as well as in the other. This comparison shows that the darkness and blindness of the Jews, threatened them, is to be understood not of the darkness of their bodily eyes, but of their minds; not being able to understand, or form a judgment of things that are as clear as noon day; and being at the utmost loss what methods to take and pursue, when they are plain and manifest before them; but being infatuated and besotted, follow the lusts and counsels of their own hearts, which lead them wrong:

*and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways*; in any steps they may take to extricate themselves out of their difficulties, distresses, and calamities, or to bring themselves into easy and comfortable circumstances; to get wealth and riches, and honour and esteem with men; but, on the contrary, become forlorn and miserable, poor and wretched, mean and despicable:

*and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore*; continually, every day, all the days of their lives, oppressed with taxes and tributes, with mulcts and fines, and spoiled of their goods and substance under one pretence or another; which has been generally their case in Popish countries; for this seems not to refer to the Babylonish captivity, where they built houses, and dwelt in them, and planted gardens, and ate the fruit of them; and in the peace of cities had peace themselves, (<sup>2015</sup>Jeremiah 29:5-7);

*and no man shall save [thee]*; from the oppressions, exactions, and spoils of their enemies, nor deliver them out of their hands; whereas in process of time they had deliverance and salvation from the Babylonish captivity, by the means of Cyrus king of Persia.

**Ver. 30.** *Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her,* etc.] Espouse a woman in order to make her his wife, and before he can take her home, and consummate the marriage, through some calamity or another coming upon them, they should be set at a distance from each other, and she should fall into the hands of another man, who either should ravish her, or gain her consent to lie with her, or become his wife; which, when the marriage was so near being consummated, must be a grievous disappointment, and a great vexation:

*thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein;* being, before it is quite finished, or however before he is got into it, carried captive, or obliged to flee to a distant place:

*thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shall not gather the grapes thereof;* or make it common, on the fourth year to eat the fruits of it, as Jarchi; which might not be done until sanctified and redeemed according to the law in (<sup>(R623)</sup>Leviticus 19:23-25); (see Gill on "<sup>(R106)</sup>Deuteronomy 20:6").

**Ver. 31.** *Thine ox [shall be] slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof,* etc.] Shall be taken from the herd, and out of the field or stall, by the enemy, and killed for the soldiers to feed on, and not the least part of it given to them:

*thine ass [shall be] violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored unto thee;* no leave shall be asked to take it, but without their consent, and against their will, it should be taken away by the soldiers to carry them and their burdens, and it may be the booty and spoil of them, and never returned more:

*thy sheep [shall be] given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue [them];* not given them by themselves, but they should be suffered to fall into their hands, and they should never be able to get them out again, nor any for them. These, strictly and literally taken, suppose them to be in their own land, when those things would be done, where they were possessed of farms, and fields, cattle, being much employed in husbandry; but they may be put for any kind of substance they would be possessed of, which they should be stripped of under one pretence or another; which has

been frequently their case in their present dispersion in several countries, and in ours; when Popish princes have wanted money, they have made very exorbitant demands on the Jews in their countries, and sadly squeezed and oppressed them, and who were not able to resist them, and never had any restoration made to them.

**Ver. 32.** *Thy sons and thy daughters [shall be] given unto another people,* etc.] This also was not true in the Babylonish captivity; for then their sons and daughters went with them, and continued with them, and returned again; but has been oftentimes verified since their captivity by the Romans; frequently their sons and daughters have been taken from them by force, to be brought up in another religion, by the edicts of kings and popes, and by the canons of councils, and particularly of the fourth council of Toledo:

*and thine eyes shall look and fail;* with longing:

*for them all the day long;* expecting every day their children would be returned to them, at least wishing and hoping they would; their hearts yearning after them, but all in vain:

*and [there shall be] no might in thy hand;* to recover them out of the hands of those who had the possession of them, or fetch them back from distant countries, whither they were carried. By an edict of the Portuguese, the children of the Jews were ordered to be carried to the uninhabited islands; and when, by the king's command, they were had to the ships in which they were to be transported, it is incredible, the Jewish historian says <sup>f500</sup>, what howlings and lamentations were made by the women; and there wore none pitied them and comforted them, or could help them.

**Ver. 33.** *The fruit of thy land, and all thy labour, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up,* etc.] The same was prophesied of by Jeremiah, concerning the Babylonish captivity, and was fulfilled in it, (<sup><24517></sup>Jeremiah 5:17); and has been also verified in the frequent pillage and spoil of this people, in their present state; for though they have no land to till, from whence to gather fruit, yet they are employed in manufactures and merchandise, the fruit and benefit of which they have been frequently stripped of:

*and thou shall be only oppressed and crushed always;* this seems best to agree with their present case; for in their former captivities they were not always oppressed and crushed, but had respite and deliverance; (see Gill on <sup><f5329></sup>Deuteronomy 28:29”).

**Ver. 34.** *So that thou shalt be mad, for the sight of thine eyes that thou shall see.*] On account of the shocking things seen by them, their dreadful calamities, oppressions, and persecutions, such as before related; not only violent diseases on their bodies, which were grievous to behold, as well as their pains were intolerable, and made them mad; but to be deprived of a betrothed wife, a newly built house, and a newly planted vineyard; to have an ox slain, and an ass taken away by their enemies, and their sheep given to them before their eyes; to have their sons and daughters taken from them, and brought up in another religion, and to be stripped of their substance; these have made them stark mad, insomuch that they have sometimes destroyed themselves and their families. In Germany, in their rage and madness, they burnt a city and themselves in it; and, in the same country, being summoned by an edict to change their religion, or to be burnt, they agreed to meet together in a certain house, and destroy one another; and first parents killed their children, and husbands their wives, and then killed themselves; leaving only one person to be their doorkeeper, who finished the tragedy by destroying himself, as their own historian relates <sup>f501</sup>. Other stories of the like kind are reported of them, and some such facts as done in our own nation <sup>f502</sup>.

**Ver. 35.** *The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch, that cannot be healed,* etc.] Which in those parts as it is very painful, so is not easily cured; and this which is threatened was incurable by the art of man, as others in (<sup><16827></sup>Deuteronomy 28:27); and which should not stop there in the lower parts of the body, but proceed and spread:

*from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head;* and so be filled with them, as Job was with his boils and ulcers.

**Ver. 36.** *And the Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee,* etc.] This was fulfilled both in Jehoiachin and in Zedekiah, kings of Judah, who were carried captive to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar, (<sup><12415></sup>2 Kings 24:15 25:6,7);

*unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known;* the land of Babylon, which was at a distance from them, and is represented in Scripture as afar off, (<sup><24615></sup>Jeremiah 5:15); and which the Jews, not being a trading people, or dealing in merchandise in foreign parts, were unacquainted with:

*and there shall thou serve other gods, wood and stone*; which they were obliged to do in Babylon, of which it seems best to understand it; for though it may be interpreted of their compliance with the image worship of the Papists in their present condition, as the former clause may be of their rulers and governors, included in the name of king, carried captive by the Romans; who were a nation as little, if not less known than the Babylonians: but the former sense seems to suit best here, as this does with (<sup>4826</sup>Deuteronomy 28:64); where the language is somewhat different, and very appropriate. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“shall pay tribute to those that worship idols of wood and stone.”

**Ver. 37.** *And thou shall become an astonishment*, etc.] To neighbouring nations, that shall hear of their overthrow and captivity, and that shall see the miserable condition they are brought into:

*a proverb and a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee*; both for the wickedness committed by them, and for the ill usage of them by the nations among whom they should be, as they were in the Babylonish captivity; (see <sup>2249</sup>Jeremiah 24:9); and now are, it being common to say,

“do you think I am a Jew?”

or,

“none but a Jew would have done such a thing.”

**Ver. 38.** *Thou shall carry much seed into the field*, etc.] And sow it plentifully; this and what is said in some following verses plainly refer to them while in their own land, before carried captive, and not to their present case and circumstances:

*and shall gather [but] little in at harvest*; little springing up, or not coming to perfection, being blighted and blasted, and so yielded but a small crop; (see <sup>3000</sup>Haggai 1:9); and chiefly for the following reason:

*for the locust shall consume it*; which is a great destroyer of the fruits of the earth; (see <sup>2000</sup>Joel 1:4).

**Ver. 39.** *Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress [them]*, etc.] Plant them and prune them, in expectation of much fruit from them:

*but shall neither drink [of] the wine nor gather [the grapes];* so far from drinking of the wine of them, that they should not be able to gather any grapes from them:

*for the worms shall eat them;* a sort of worms pernicious to vines, which the Greeks call “ipes”, or “ikes”, <sup>f503</sup>; and the Latins “convolvuli” and “volvoes”, as Pliny <sup>f504</sup>.

**Ver. 40.** *Thou shalt have olive trees throughout thy coasts,* etc.] In the several parts of the land of Canaan, which is therefore called a land of olive oil, (<sup><R88></sup>Deuteronomy 8:8);

*but thou shalt not anoint [thyself] with the oil;* nor any other relations, friends, guests, as was usual at entertainments; (see <sup><R215></sup>Psalm 23:5 <sup><L73></sup>Luke 7:38,46); for the phrase “thyself” is not in the text. The reason why they should not anoint is, because they would have no oil to anoint with:

*for thine olive shall cast [his fruit];* before it is ripe, by one means or another, as by winds, or blasting and mildew; (see <sup><M49></sup>Amos 4:9 <sup><R17></sup>Habakkuk 3:17).

**Ver. 41.** *Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them,* etc.] Or, “they shall not be thine” <sup>f505</sup>; being taken from them, and given to others, (see <sup><R32></sup>Deuteronomy 28:32); and for the following reason:

*for they shall go into captivity;* as when the ten tribes were carried captive by Shalmaneser, and the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar, and all the people of the Jews by the Romans.

**Ver. 42.** *All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.*] Which is a creature that not only consumes grass, and herbs, and the corn of the field, but all green trees; (see <sup><M15></sup>Exodus 10:15). This sort here has its name from the shade they make, hiding the light of the sun, and darkening the face of the earth at no on day; or from the noise they make with their wings in flying; (see <sup><M15></sup>Joel 2:5).

**Ver. 43.** *The stranger that [is] within thee shall get up above thee very high,* etc.] In wealth and riches, in power and authority, in honour and dignity. This Manasseh Ben Israel <sup>f506</sup> interprets of the Samaritans, whom the king of Assyria drove out of Samaria, and the neighbouring places; but the design of the expression is to show how mean and abject they should

be in another country; that even one who had been a stranger or proselyte of the gate, when in their own country, should now be vastly above them:

*and thou shall come down, very low*; into a very mean condition, to be in great subjection, a vassal and a slave; (see <sup><1961></sup>Psalm 106:41,42); and much more when reduced by the Romans, and sent to the mines in Egypt.

**Ver. 44.** *He shall lend to thee, and thou shall not lend to him*, etc.] The stranger, or one of another nation, shall be in a capacity of lending to the Jew, when the Jew would not be able to lend to the Gentile, his circumstances being so low and mean; to show which is the design of the expression, and not the kindness or unkindness of either; (see <sup><1982></sup>Deuteronomy 28:12);

*he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail*; he shall be ruler and governor, and thou shalt be subject to him; (see <sup><1983></sup>Deuteronomy 28:13).

**Ver. 45.** *Moreover, all these curses shall come upon thee*, etc.] Before related, as well as what follow:

*and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee till thou be destroyed*; which though they would endeavour to flee from and escape, should not be able, since they would follow them so closely and swiftly, and overtake them, and seize upon them; (see <sup><1985></sup>Deuteronomy 28:15);

*because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee*; to which disobedience all the curses are to be imputed that go before or follow after.

**Ver. 46.** *And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder*, etc.] That is, those curses before pronounced, (<sup><1975></sup>Deuteronomy 27:15-26 28:16-19), and what follow, should rest and remain upon them, continue with them, and be very visible on them; so as to be observed by others, as a sign of the wrath and displeasure of God, and of the fulfilment of prophecy, and of the truth of divine revelation: and so “for a wonder”: as it is most astonishing to observe how exactly all the curses threatened them have fallen upon them and have abode with them, as they did in their former captivities, and more especially do in the present one: and, what is the greater wonder, that notwithstanding these dreadful calamities, and so long continued, enough to have crushed any people from being a people, yet they have continued, and still do continue, a distinct people; which is a standing miracle, and one would think sufficient to convince the most

hardened and obstinate deist of the truth and authority of the sacred Scriptures; in which stand so many glaring prophecies that have been fulfilled, and are continually fulfilling in this people:

*and upon thy seed for ever*; this shows that these curses, said to be upon them, not only refer to those that came upon them at and in the Babylonish captivity, but to those that came upon them at their destruction by the Romans, and which have continued on them nineteen hundred years; and how much longer they will continue none can say: it will be their case, until new heavens and a new earth are created, or there will be a new state of things, at least with them; when they shall be converted to the Lord, and all Israel saved; (see <sup><3617></sup>Isaiah 65:17,18 <sup><4125></sup>Romans 11:25,26); and it may be observed, that the ten tribes carried captive never returned.

**Ver. 47.** *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God*, etc.] By attending his worship, and keeping his commandments:

*with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all [things]*; which they enjoyed in the land of Canaan, a land that abounded with all good things; which laid them under great obligations to serve the Lord: and yet, as they were wanting in a ready attendance on his worship, and in a cheerful obedience to his laws, so in their sacrifices, of praise and thanksgivings for their manifold mercies; and, because of all this, the curses written in this book came upon them.

**Ver. 48.** *Therefore shall thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee*, etc.] Since they would not serve the Lord their God, who was so good a master to them, and supplied them with all good things, and with plenty of them, they should serve other lords, their enemies, whom God would raise up and send against them; not only, the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Babylonians, but the Romans, after described, whom they should find hard masters, and from whom they; should have very severe usage, and should be

*in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all [good things]*; being destitute of food, and drink and raiment, and the common necessities of life, and so in famishing and starving circumstances:

*and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck*; bring them into a state of subjection to their enemies, which would be intolerable to them, and from which they would not be able to free themselves, any more than to break an iron yoke; which, as it agrees with the Babylonish captivity, and their

subjection in that state, (see <sup>24813</sup>Jeremiah 28:13,14); so more especially with their bondage under the Romans, who are the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the fourth beast with great iron teeth in Daniel's vision, (<sup>27023</sup>Daniel 2:33,40 7:7), and this yoke was to continue

*until he have destroyed thee*; the Jews were under the Roman yoke, Roman governors being set over them, and Judea made a Roman province many years before the destruction of their nation, city, and temple, by them.

**Ver. 49.** *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth*, etc.] Now though Babylon is represented as a country distant from Judea, and said to be a nation "from far", (<sup>24185</sup>Jeremiah 5:15); yet not "from the end of the earth"; as here; and though the Roman nation, strictly speaking, was not at so great a distance from Jerusalem, yet the Roman emperors, and great part of their armies brought against it, were fetched from our island of Great Britain, which in former times was reckoned the end of the earth, and the uttermost parts of the world <sup>f507</sup>; and so Manasseh Ben Israel <sup>f508</sup> interprets this nation of Rome, and observes, that Vespasian brought for his assistance many nations (or soldiers) out of England, France, Spain, and other parts of the world: and not only Vespasian was sent for from Britain to make war with the Jews, but when they rebelled, in the times of Adrian, Julius Severus, a very eminent general, was sent for from thence to quell them. And it appears to be a very ancient opinion of the Jews, that this passage is to be understood of the Romans, from what is related in one of their Talmuds <sup>f509</sup>: they say, that

"Trajan, being sent for by his wife to subdue the Jews, determined to come in ten days, and came in five; he came and found them (the Jews) busy in the law on that verse, "the Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far", etc. he said unto them, what are ye busy in? they answered him, so and so; he replied to them, this is the man (meaning himself) who thought to come in ten days, and came in five; and he surrounded them with his legions, and slew them:"

*[as swift] as the eagle flieth*; which may respect not so much the swiftness of this creature, the words which convey the idea being a supplement of the text, as the force with which it flies when in sight of its prey, and hastes unto it and falls upon it, which is irresistible; and this is the sense of the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and is what is ascribed to the eagle by other writers <sup>f510</sup>. Now though this figure is used of the Chaldeans and

Babylonians, (<sup><2043></sup>Jeremiah 4:13 <sup><2049></sup>Lamentations 4:19 <sup><3108></sup>Habakkuk 1:8); it agrees full as well or better with the Romans, because of their swiftness in coming from distant parts, and because of the force and impetus with which they invaded Judea, besieged Jerusalem, and attacked the Jews everywhere; and besides, the eagle was borne on the standard in the Roman army <sup>f511</sup>:

*a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand*; which, though it is also said of the language of the Chaldean nation, (<sup><2455></sup>Jeremiah 5:15); yet as the Chaldee and Hebrew languages were only dialects of one and the same language, common to the eastern nations, the Chaldee language, though on account of termination of words, pronunciation, and other things, might be difficult, and hard to be understood by the Jews, yet must be much more easy to understand than the Roman language, so widely different from theirs.

**Ver. 50.** *A nation of fierce countenance*, etc.] Or, “strong of face” <sup>f512</sup>; which aptly describes the old Romans, who are always represented as such; and whereas it is said of the Chaldeans, that they were a nation dreadful and terrible, (<sup><3107></sup>Habakkuk 1:7); the same is said of the fourth beast, or Roman empire, (<sup><2107></sup>Daniel 7:7); who were a terror to all the world:

*which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young*: cruel, unmerciful, and uncompassionate, to persons of whatsoever age or sex; which, as it was the character of the Chaldeans, (<sup><4667></sup>2 Chronicles 36:17); so of the Romans, who especially showed no mercy to the Jews, as Josephus <sup>f513</sup>, who was an eyewitness, testifies.

“The Romans (says he) showed no mercy to any age, out of hatred to the nation (of the Jews), and in remembrance of the injuries done to Cestius;”

one of their governors, when among them. And in another place he says <sup>f514</sup>,

“the Romans, remembering what they suffered in the siege, spared none, and showed no mercy.”

**Ver. 51.** *And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle*, etc.] Larger and lesser, oxen and sheep, as their calves and lambs, and kids of the goat:

*and the fruit of thy land*; their wheat, barley, figs, grapes, pomegranates, olives, and dates:

*until thou be destroyed*; the land of Judea, and all the increase of it: this being before said, (<sup><1531></sup>Deuteronomy 28:31,33); and here repeated, shows that the same should be fulfilled at different times, as by the Chaldeans, so by the Romans; whose nation, or army, with their general at the head of them, may be more especially here intended by “he”, that should eat up their fruit until utter destruction was brought upon them:

*which [also] shall not leave thee [either] corn, wine, or oil, [or] the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee*; all being consumed by the Roman army. There is a promise and prophecy, that though this would be the case, as it has been, there shall be a time when it shall be so no more; (see <sup><2318></sup>Isaiah 62:8,9).

**Ver. 52.** *And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates*, etc.] That is, in all their cities and walled towns, which had gates and bars for security:

*until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land*; the Jews had several cities well fenced and strongly fortified, besides Jerusalem, which was fortified both by art and nature, and in which they greatly put their trust and confidence; but these were broken down, particularly by the battering rams of the Romans:

*and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee*; this is repeated for the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of, and abate their trust and confidence in their outward strength. Now all this was fulfilled, partly in the siege of Samaria by the king of Assyria, who went through all the land of the ten tribes, (<sup><1215></sup>2 Kings 17:5 18:9,10); and in Sennacherib’s taking the fenced cities of Judah, (<sup><1213></sup>2 Kings 18:13); and in the siege of Jerusalem, and breaking down the walls of it by Nebuchadnezzar, (<sup><1251></sup>2 Kings 25:10); and, last of all, in the siege of Jerusalem, and battering down the walls of it, by the Romans; at which time also all their strong and fenced cities throughout the land were taken and demolished.

**Ver. 53.** *And thou shall eat the fruit of thine body*, etc.] Than which nothing can be more shocking and unnatural, which is explained as follows:

*the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee*; which is an aggravation of the cruel and inhuman fact:

*in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee*; this shows the cause of it, a famine by reason of the closeness of the siege, so that no provisions could be brought in for their relief; and all within being eaten up, and everything that was eatable, even the most nauseous and disagreeable, they would be led on to this strange, unheard of, and barbarous action, eating their own children. This was fulfilled in the siege of Samaria, (<sup><1165></sup>2 Kings 6:25,28,29); and in the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, (<sup><2120></sup>Lamentations 2:10 4:10) and again in the Apocrypha:

“Moreover he hath delivered them to be in subjection to all the kingdoms that are round about us, to be as a reproach and desolation among all the people round about, where the Lord hath scattered them.” (Baruch 2:4)

and in the siege of the same city by the Romans; of which an instance will be hereafter given.

**Ver. 54.** [*So that*] *the man [that is] tender among you, and very delicate,* etc.] Not only the rustic that has been brought up meanly, and used to hard living; but one that has been bred very tenderly, and lived in a delicate manner, like the rich man in (<sup><2169></sup>Luke 16:19); that fared sumptuously every day:

*his eye shall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his bosom, and towards the remnant of his children which he shall leave*; that is, he shall begrudge his brother, who is so nearly related to him, the least bit of food; yea, his wife, he dearly loved, and is one flesh with him, his other self, and even his children, which are parts of himself, such of them as were left not eaten by him; or his eye should be evil upon them, he should look with an evil eye on them, determining within himself to kill and eat them next. Though the particular instance in which his eye would be evil to them follows, yet no doubt there are other instances in which his eye would be evil towards them, as there were at the siege of Jerusalem, and have been since. Josephus<sup>f515</sup> says,

“that in every house where there was any appearance of food (or anything that looked like it, that had the shadow of it) there was a battle; and the dearest friends fought with one another, snatching away from each other, the miserable supports of life;”

as the husband from his wife and children, and the wife from her husband and children; see more in (<sup>f516</sup>Deuteronomy 28:56); and, in later times, we told by the Jewish historian <sup>f516</sup>, that wrote an account of their sufferings and distresses since their dispersion, that at Fez the Jews sold their children for slaves for bread.

**Ver. 55.** *So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat*, etc.] Neither give to a brother, nor to a wife, nor to any of his remaining children, the least bit of the flesh of a child he has killed and dressed for his own food; which adds to the barbarity of his action:

*because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates*; every creature being eaten up, dogs, cats, etc. and whatsoever else could be any ways made food of; as the dung of beasts, belts, shoes, the leather on shields, etc. as Josephus <sup>f517</sup> says they did eat; and this being the case, nothing eatable remaining, therefore his heart would be hardened against his nearest relations, and not allow them the least part with him, even of what was so shocking and unnatural.

**Ver. 56.** *And the tender and delicate woman amongst you*, etc.] Who is instanced in because of her sex, which is more pitiful and compassionate, and especially one that has been brought up genteelly, and has always lived deliciously, on the most delicate fare, and nicest dainties, and used to all the delights of nature:

*which would not venture to set her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness*; for fear of taking cold, or defiling her feet:

*her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter*; begrudge them every bit they eat, and restrain food from them as much as in her lies, and even snatch it out of their mouths; so Josephus <sup>f518</sup> relates, that

“women snatched the food out of the mouths of their husbands, and sons out of the mouths of their fathers; and, what is most miserable, mothers out of the mouths of their infants.”

**Ver. 57.** *And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet*, etc.] Or her secundine, “her afterbirth”, as in the margin of our Bibles; so the Targum of Jonathan and Aben Ezra interpret it. The latter describes it,

“the place of the fetus, while it abides in the womb of its mother;”

the membrane in which the child is wrapped; and it is suggested that, as nauseous as that is, the delicate woman should eat it, and then the newborn child that was wrapped in it; so Jarchi interprets it, little children; though it seems to be distinguished from the children she bears or brings forth in the next clause:

*and towards her children which she shall bear*; that is, have an evil eye towards them, to eat them as follows:

*for she shall eat them for want of all [things] secretly in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates*; that is, eat her children, being reduced to the utmost extremity, being in want of all things, having nothing at all to abate her sharp hunger; which, and nothing else, could incline her, and prevail upon her to do an action so monstrously horrid: and which she would do in the most private and secret manner; both lest others should partake with her, as well as being conscious of the foulness and blackness of the crime, that would not by any means bear the light; and all this owing to the closeness of the siege, and the unspeakable distress they should be in through it. For the illustration of this, take the following story as related by Josephus<sup>f519</sup>;

“a woman, whose name was Mary, that lived beyond Jordan, illustrious for her descent and riches fled with the multitude to Jerusalem when besieged carrying with her her substance, and what food she could get that were left to her by the spoilers; where being pressed with famine, she took her sucking child, killed it boiled it, and ate half of it, and then laid up the rest, and covered it; and when the seditious party entered the house, they smelt it, and demanded her food, threatening to kill her if she did not deliver it; which when she brought forth, declaring what she had done, they were struck with horror; to whom she said, this is my son, and this my own deed; eat, for I have eaten; be not more tender or softer than a woman, and more sympathizing or more pitiful than a mother.”

All the ideas that this prophecy of Moses conveys are to be met with in this account; as of a woman well bred and delicate, reduced to the utmost distress, and wanting all the necessaries of life, killing her tender infant, a sucking babe, eating it secretly, and laying up the rest covered for another

time. If Moses had lived to have known the fact committed, as Josephus did, he could not have expressed it well in stronger and clearer terms than he has done. This is a most amazing instance of a prophecy delivered out two thousand years or more before the fact was done, and of the exact accomplishment of it; and if the observation of a learned critic <sup>f520</sup> can be established, that the first word of this verse should be **hl çbw**, and so be rendered, “and she shall boil that which cometh out from between her feet, even her children which she shall bear”, the fulfilment of the prophecy will appear still more exact, both at the siege of Samaria, (<sup><116></sup>2 Kings 6:20); and of Jerusalem, as in the above relation of Josephus.

**Ver. 58.** *If thou wilt not observe to do all the words this law, that are written in this book*, etc.] Of Deuteronomy, in which there is a repetition of the laws before delivered, and an addition of some new ones; all which were to be so observed as to be done, to this end,

*that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name of the Lord thy God;* or that it might appear that the fear of God was before their eyes, and in their hearts, by their obedience to his law; that they had a proper awe and reverence of him, who is glorious in his titles and attributes, and whose name Jehovah is holy and reverend; and who, as the covenant God of his people, is to, be feared for his goodness sake.

**Ver. 59.** *Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful*, etc.] Visible, remarkable, distinguishable, and astonishing to all that see them:

*and the plagues of thy seed;* for they were to continue, as they have done, With their posterity, age after age:

*[even] great plagues, and of long continuance;* great as to quality and quantity, and firm, sure, lasting, and durable; the word used is rendered “sure” in (<sup><258></sup>Isaiah 55:3); sure by prophecy and in the event; and which when inflicted remained, as they have 1700 years; all which might be believed as certain, or what would certainly come to pass, and be depended on:

*and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance;* besides those diseases mentioned (<sup><630></sup>Deuteronomy 28:27,35); or however others including them.

**Ver. 60.** *Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt*, etc.] All that in a way of judgment were brought upon the Egyptians for refusing

to let Israel go; or all such diseases as were peculiar to them, and common among them, as the leprosy, the itch, ulcers, etc.

*which thou wast afraid of*; when living among them, lest they should catch them of them, or they should be inflicted on them by the hand of God:

*and they shall cleave unto thee*; not only should come upon them, but continue with them; they should not easily get rid of them, or be cured of them.

**Ver. 61.** *Also every sickness and every plague which [is] not written in the book of this law*, etc.] Which is not here mentioned or threatened; and it suggests, that whatsoever sickness or disease that could be thought of or named, or were at any time in any place among men, might be expected to come upon them for their disobedience:

*them will the Lord bring upon thee until thou be destroyed*; the Jews themselves<sup>f521</sup> own this has been fulfilled on them.

**Ver. 62.** *And ye shall be left few in number*, etc.] There were but very few left in the land of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar's general when Jerusalem was taken by him; and these were of the poorer sort, and were left for vinedressers and husbandmen, (<sup><2490></sup>Jeremiah 39:10 52:16); and how much they were reduced by the Romans will appear by the accounts Josephus gives of those that were slain, and made prisoners by them: he says<sup>f522</sup>,

“there were 1,100,000 slain at the siege of Jerusalem and by the war, and 97,000 made prisoners;”

and it is computed that 1,240,490 were destroyed in Jerusalem and other parts of the nation<sup>f523</sup>; and it is also said by their historian<sup>f524</sup>, that of those that were transported from Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine into Spain, scarce a thousandth part remained and that an infinite number were slain in France and Germany; and though their number equalled those that came out of Egypt, yet scarce five thousand of them were left:

*whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude*; and, as it is sometimes said, as the sand of the sea, as was promised to Abraham, (<sup><0155></sup>Genesis 15:5 22:18); and was fulfilled in the days of Solomon (<sup><1000></sup>1 Kings 4:20);

*because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God*; in his law, and by his prophets; and especially by the voice of the true Messiah, in his

everlasting Gospel; of whom it is said, “today if ye will hear his voice”; etc. (~~scrips~~ Hebrews 3:7).

**Ver. 63.** *And it shall come to pass, [that] as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good,* etc.] The Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan; who with great delight and pleasure in them brought them out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness, protecting them and providing all good things for them; and brought them into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, and settled them there; and gave them judges and kings, priests and prophets, for a long series of time, with other innumerable blessings he bestowed upon them:

*and to multiply you;* so that they became as the stars of heaven, and the sand of the sea, as before observed:

*so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nought;* take as much pleasure in their ruin and destruction, whereby his justice would be glorified, and the honour of his laws preserved, as before in bestowing good things on them, in which mercy and kindness were displayed:

*and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it;* in a violent manner, by their enemies, and against their wills, they being loath to leave it. The Emperor Adrian, to prevent their insurrections and rebellions, which had given him a great deal of trouble, ordered by an edict that no Jew should come into Jerusalem, nor into the land of Judea, or be seen in it, which is observed by several writers <sup>f525</sup>; by which means the country was cleared of them. In later times some of them did get thither again, but they were but few. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew of the twelfth century, travelled into several parts of the world in quest of his countrymen, and particularly into Judea, and his view was to magnify his people; and yet owns he found at Jerusalem only two hundred persons, whose employment was dyeing wool, and dwelt in a corner of the town under the tower of David; and but twelve at Bethlehem, three at Maresha, at Shunem indeed three hundred, none at Gilead, two at Nob, who were dyers, three at Ramah, one at Joppa, none at Jafne, where had been a famous academy, none at Ashdod, and at Tiberias about fifty <sup>f526</sup>. And our countryman Sandys <sup>f527</sup>, who travelled into Judea in the seventeenth century, says,

“here be some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land, but in their own country do live as aliens.”

**Ver. 64.** *And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other,* etc.] Which refers to their present dispersion, being now, more or fewer, in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south:

*and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, [even] wood and stone:* it may be observed, that the phrase, “which either thou nor fathers have known”, is fitly added here, which is not used of them, (<sup>f528</sup>Deuteronomy 28:36); and well agrees with the idols of the Papists, their images of the Virgin Mary, and saints departed, made of wood and stone, which were such the fathers of the Jews never knew; just as it is said of the host, the consecrated wafer, the breaden god honoured by antichrist, that it is “a god who his fathers knew not”, (<sup>f529</sup>Daniel 11:38); the apostles and ancient fathers of the church. Now in Popish countries the Jews have often been prevailed upon to change, or at least dissemble their religion, and embrace Popery: and have worshipped images of wood and stone. The author of the history of their calamities and sufferings owns this;

“multitudes (he says <sup>f528</sup>) in Spain and Portugal forsook the law of Moses, and joined the Papists, pretending at least to be of their religion.”

He makes mention of sixteen thousand at one time <sup>f529</sup>, and some, he says <sup>f530</sup>,

“that were driven out of Spain, came into Italy, where the young men pressed with famine could not bear it, and changed their religion, and began to worship images that they might have to satisfy their hunger; and the Papists used to go about with a crucifix in one hand, and a piece of bread in the other, promising the bread to those that would worship the crucifix; and so many famishing persons forsook the law of Moses, and mixed with them:”

and to this day the convents of monks and nuns in Spain are full of them; and most of their canons, inquisitors, and bishops, are Jews <sup>f531</sup>. The Targum of Jonathan indeed, to clear them from idolatry itself, gives another sense of these words, paraphrasing them,

“ye shall pay tribute to the worshippers of idols.”

**Ver. 65.** *And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest,* etc.] No quiet settlement, nor certain dwelling, being obliged to move from place to place through cruel edicts, heavy fines and mulcts, exorbitant taxes and impositions, and diligent search made after them by the courts of the inquisition, especially where any substance was to be gotten. The Jews themselves <sup>f532</sup> own that this passage is now fulfilled in them:

*but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart;* being always in fear lest their persons should be seized on, their children taken from them, and their goods confiscated; hence the poet <sup>f533</sup> gives them the epithet of “trembling”:

*and failing of eyes:* in looking for a vainly expected Messiah, to deliver them from all their fears and troubles:

*and sorrow of mind;* under their present afflictions and calamities.

**Ver. 66.** *And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee,* etc.] Whether it shall be spared or not by the enemy:

*and thou shalt fear day and night;* being in continual dread of being killed:

*and shalt have none assurance of thy life;* of its being continued a moment scarcely, but live in constant fear and expectation of its being taken away.

**Ver. 67.** *In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even,* etc.] Wishing they might get through the day well, fearing their life would be taken away before night, or some sad calamity befall them before the day was past:

*and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning;* dreading what would happen to them in the night, that some messenger of death would be sent to dispatch them, or they should be haled out of bed to a court of inquisition, and cast into a dungeon:

*for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which, thou shalt see;* often beholding such dreadful sights, as their countrymen put upon the rack, and cruelly tortured, and then burnt alive; and so their hearts would fear and tremble, lest they should be the next that would be taken up and used in this manner; besides other severities and hard usages, with which their brethren were treated, and they in continual fear of.

**Ver. 68.** *And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships,* etc.] Either into a state of hard bondage and slavery, like that their fathers were in, in Egypt; or rather, strictly and literally, should be brought into Egypt again, since it is said to be “with” or “in ships”. This does not respect the going of those Jews into Egypt who were left in the land of Judea, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; for that was against the express command of God, (<sup>2403</sup>Jeremiah 42:13-22 43:4-7). There were several movings of them into Egypt after that time; an Heathen historian <sup>f534</sup> tells us, that not a few thousands of Jews went into Egypt and Phoenicia, because of the sedition in Syria after the death of Alexander; and where, it seems, in process of time, they became slaves: for we are told by Josephus <sup>f535</sup>, that 120,000 slaves were set free by Ptolemy Philadelphus; but what is chiefly respected here is their case in the times of the Romans, and by their means. Now when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, those above seventeen years of age were sent by him to the works, or mines, in Egypt, as the same historian relates <sup>f536</sup>; and after their last overthrow by Adrian many thousands were sold, and what could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by “shipwreck”, or famine, or were slaughtered by the people <sup>f537</sup> whereby this prophecy was literally and exactly fulfilled, and which is owned by the Jews themselves. Manasseh Ben Israel <sup>f538</sup> observes, that though Vespasian banished the Jews into various countries, Egypt is only mentioned by way of reproach, as if it had been said, ye shall go captives into the land from which ye went out triumphant:

*by the way whereof I spake unto thee, thou shall see it no more again;* the Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again in ships;”

even the same divine Word, the Son of God, that brought them out of it, and went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire, now provoked by their rejection of him, would lead them back again thither; the paraphrast adds,

“through the midst of the Red sea, in the path in which ye passed;”

as if they were carried over into Egypt in ships, just in that part of the sea in which they had passed before; but that was an unknown and unseen path, after the waters were closed up, and never to be seen more, and which is here meant; for not Egypt, but the way in which they passed, was to be seen no more:

*and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen, and no man shall buy [you]*; that is, there in Egypt they would be offered to sale, and so many would be sold until the market was glutted with them, and there would be no buyers. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“ye shall be sold there at first to your enemies, at a dear price, as artificers, and afterwards at a mean price as servants and handmaids, until ye become despised, and be brought to serve for nothing, and there be none to take you in.”

Jarchi interprets it of they themselves being desirous, and seeking to be sold, to avoid cruelties and death; which agrees with the sense of the word, which may be rendered, “ye shall offer yourselves for sale”; but there will be no buyer, because their enemies will determine upon the slaughter and consumption of them; and to the same purpose Aben Ezra. There were such numbers of them to be sold both at Egypt and at Rome, that the sellers of them had but a poor market for them; and it seems not only because of their number, but the ill opinion had of them as servants. Hegesippus<sup>f539</sup> says,

“there were many to be sold, but there were few buyers; for the Romans despised the Jews for service, nor were there Jews left to redeem their own.”

It is said<sup>f540</sup>, that thirty were sold for a penny; a just retaliation to them, who had sold their Messiah for thirty pieces of silver.