

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 11

This chapter contains an account of the sins of the princes of Judah; a prophecy of their destruction; some comfortable, promises respecting those of the captivity; and the chapter is closed with the finishing of the vision of the Lord's removing from Jerusalem; and the whole being ended, the prophet related it to the men of the captivity. In (^{2310b}Ezekiel 11:1); the prophet, is shown five and twenty men, among whom were two he knew, and are mentioned by name, and were princes of the people; and he is told that these men devised mischief, and gave bad advice to the people, (^{2310c}Ezekiel 11:2,3); wherefore he is bid to prophesy against them, (^{2310d}Ezekiel 11:4); which he accordingly did, the Spirit of the Lord falling upon him, (^{2310e}Ezekiel 11:5); declaring that their secret evils were known, as well as their public ones; and that, seeing they had multiplied their slain, and had feared the sword, the sword should come upon them; some should fall by it, and others should be carried captive; the consequence of which would be, that God would be known, and his justice acknowledged, it being what their sins deserved, (^{2310f}Ezekiel 11:6-12); upon this prophecy being delivered out, one of the princes before named died immediately; which filled the prophet with great concern, and put him upon expostulating with God, (^{2311a}Ezekiel 11:13); wherefore, for his comfort, he is told, that though the inhabitants of Jerusalem had insulted their brethren that were carried captive, and looked upon the land of Israel as their own possession, that God would be a little sanctuary to them; that he would gather them out of all lands, and give them the land of Israel; that they should come thither, and remove all idolatry from it, and should have regenerating and renewing grace given them, to walk in the statutes and ordinances of the Lord, by which they should appear to be his people, and he to be their God, (^{2311b}Ezekiel 11:14-20); but as for such that continued in their abominable idolatries, these should receive a just recompence of reward, (^{2311c}Ezekiel 11:21); after which follows an account of the entire removal of the glory of the Lord from the city of Jerusalem, (^{2311d}Ezekiel 11:22,23); and the prophet being, in vision, brought again to Chaldea,

reports the whole he had seen to them of the captivity, (²⁹¹²⁴Ezekiel 11:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, the spirit lifted me up, &c.*] From the inner court of the temple, where the prophet was, according to the last account of him, (²⁹¹⁸⁶Ezekiel 8:16); it was the same Spirit that took him by the lock of his head, and lifted him up, as in (²⁹¹⁰⁸Ezekiel 8:3); and perhaps in the same manner:

and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house, which looketh eastward; where were the cherubim, and the wheels, and the glory of God above them, (²⁹¹⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19);

and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; not the same as in (²⁹¹⁸⁶Ezekiel 8:16); for they were in a different place, between the porch and the altar; and about different service, they were worshipping there; and seem to be men of a different order, priests; whereas these were at the door of the eastern gate, sitting as a court of judicature, and were civil magistrates; though Jarchi and Kimchi take them to be the same. Some say Jerusalem was divided into twenty four parishes, districts, or wards, and everyone had its own head, ruler, and governor; and that there was one who was the president over them all, like the mayor and aldermen of a city;

among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur; not the same that is mentioned in (²⁹¹⁸¹Ezekiel 8:11); he was the son of Shaphan, this of Azur; he was one of the seventy of the ancients of Israel, this one of the twenty five heads or rulers of the people; he seems to have been a prince; by having a censer in his hand, this was a priest: the Septuagint and Arabic versions call him Jechoniah:

and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah; these two are mentioned by name, as being principal men, and well known by the prophet; and the latter is observed more especially for what befell him, hereafter related:

princes of the people; men who were entrusted with power and authority to exercise the laws of the nation; and who should have been reformers of the people, and ought to have given them good advice, and set them good examples; whereas they were the reverse, as follows:

Ver. 2. *Then said he unto me, son of man, &c.*] That is, the Lord, or, the Spirit of the Lord, that lifted him up:

these [are] the men that devise mischief; or “vanity”^{f146}; this is to be understood not of the two only that are named, though it may of them chiefly; but of all the twenty five, who formed schemes for the holding out of the siege, and for the security of the city, and of themselves in it, which was all folly and vanity:

and give wicked counsel in this city; either in ecclesiastical affairs, to forsake the worship of God, and cleave to the idols of the nations; or in civil things, as follows:

Ver. 3. *Which say [it is] not near, let us build houses, &c.*] Meaning that the destruction of the city was not near, as the prophet had foretold, (^{201B}Ezekiel 7:3,6,7,10,12); and therefore encourage the people to build houses, and rest themselves secure, as being safe from all danger, and having nothing to fear from the Chaldean army; and so putting away the evil day far from them, which was just at hand: though the words may be rendered, “it is not [proper] to build houses near”^{f147}; near the city of Jerusalem, in the suburbs of it, since they would be liable to be destroyed by the enemy; but this would not be condemned as wicked counsel, but must be judged very prudent and advisable: and the same may be objected to another rendering of the word, which might be offered, “not in the midst to build houses”; or it is not proper to build houses in the midst of the city, in order to receive the multitude that flock out of the country, through fear of the enemy, to Jerusalem for safety; since by this means, as the number of the inhabitants would be increased, so provisions in time would become scarce, and a famine must ensue, which would oblige to deliver up the city into the hands of the besiegers; wherefore the first sense seems best. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render them, “are not the houses lately built?” and so not easily demolished, and are like to continue long, and we in them;

this [city is] the cauldron, and we [be] the flesh; referring to, and laughing at, what one of the prophets, namely Jeremiah, had said of them, comparing them to a boiling pot, (^{201B}Jeremiah 1:13); and it is as if they should say, be it so, that this city is as a cauldron or boiling pot, then we are the flesh in it; and as flesh is not taken out of a pot until it is boiled, no more shall we be removed from hence till we die; we shall live and die in this city; and as it is difficult and dangerous to take hot boiling meat out of a cauldron, so it, is unlikely we should be taken out of this city, and carried captive; what a cauldron or brasen pot is to the flesh, it holds and keeps it

from falling into the fire; that the walls of Jerusalem are to us, our safety and preservation; nor need we fear captivity.

Ver. 4. *Therefore prophecy against them, &c.*] Evil things against them, things that are disagreeable to them; since they flatter themselves with good things, and cry peace and safety, let them know that destruction is coming upon them: or, “concerning them”^{f148}; what will befall them, and that it will be otherwise with them than they imagine:

prophecy, O son of man; this is repeated, not only to stir up the prophet to the performance of his work and office, not fearing the faces, and revilings, and mockings of men; but to show the indignation of the Lord at their scoffs and jeers, and the certain accomplishment of what should be predicted.

Ver. 5. *And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me, &c.*] In an extraordinary manner, and afresh, and enlightened his mind, and showed him things that should come to pass; and filled him with boldness and courage to declare them. The Targum interprets it of the spirit of prophecy:

and said unto me, speak; what I shall show and put into thy mouth, that speak out; be not afraid, but boldly declare all that I give thee in commission to say:

thus saith the Lord, thus have ye said, O house of Israel; as in (^{311B}Ezekiel 11:3); which perhaps was said in secret, and spoken privately, but known by the Lord; and it was not only the princes that said it, but the whole body of the people joined in with it, and agreed to it; though it is very probable they were influenced by the former:

for I know the things that come into your mind, [everyone of] them; not only their scoffing words, but the thoughts of their hearts; not one of them escaped the knowledge of God; the consideration of which should command an awe on men, and engage them to a watchfulness over their thoughts, words, and actions.

Ver. 6. *Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, &c.*] Had killed many of the prophets of the Lord that had been sent unto them, and had shed much innocent blood; and not only had unjustly condemned many to die, and had put them to death without a cause; but also the death of all those that were slain while the city was besieging, and when it was taken, were owing to their advice and counsel, in encouraging them to hold out, and not deliver

up the city; fancying they should be able to defend it, contrary to the declarations of the Lord by the prophet; wherefore their death is laid to such advisers, and they are called their slain:

and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain; such numbers of innocent persons being put to death, as in the times of Manasseh, (^{<12216>}2 Kings 21:16); or so many dying of the famine, pestilence, and sword, during the siege, and at the taking of Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Applying the parabolical expressions they had derided, and explaining them, in a different sense from what they had put upon them:

your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they [are] the flesh; the prophets they had killed; the persons, who had died innocently for crimes laid to their charge they had not been guilty of; and such who had fallen by one judgment or another since the siege, they were the persons intended by “the flesh”, and not such as were alive; and therefore could promise themselves nothing from this proverb they had taken up, and scoffed at:

and this [city is] the cauldron; that holds the slain, and in which they will lie and continue, and not the living:

but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it: where they promised themselves safety, and a long continuance; yet should not abide, but be carried captive.

Ver. 8. *Ye have feared the sword, &c.*] Of the Chaldeans; and therefore they sent to the Egyptians for help. The Targum is,

“ye have been afraid of them that kill with the sword;”

and not afraid of the Lord; (see ^{<008>}Matthew 10:28);

and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; meaning the Chaldeans, who were sent by the Lord, and, when they took the city, put many to death by the sword, and carried captive others.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, &c.*] Jerusalem, the cauldron, as they said it was, and where they thought they should be safe; this is repeated, to express the certainty of it, and to excite their attention to it, and remove their vain confidence:

and deliver you into the hands of strangers; the Chaldeans:

and will execute judgments among you; punishments for sin, such as famine, pestilence, sword, and captivity.

Ver. 10. *Ye shall fall by the sword, &c.*] Of the Chaldeans; not in the city of Jerusalem, but out of it, when it was broken up, and they fled:

I will judge you in the border of Israel; that is, inflict punishment on them, particularly by the sword; which was done at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where the sons of Zedekiah were slain, and all the princes of Judah, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 52:9,10); and this was on the border of the land of Israel, (²³⁴⁸Numbers 34:8,11);

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; who knows things, and foretells them before they are; and am able to accomplish all that is threatened; and am just and righteous in all my ways and works; and who am known by the judgments executed by me.

Ver. 11. *This [city] shall not be your cauldron, &c.*] It was one, as in (²³¹⁷Ezekiel 11:7); but not theirs; it was the cauldron for the slain, for the dead, but not the living:

neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst of it; or, “and ye shall be”^{f149} or, “but ye shall be”; the negative is understood, and rightly supplied by us; though the Targum renders it without it,

“but ye shall be in the midst of it, as flesh that is boiled in the midst of a pot:”

[but] I will judge you in the border of Israel; this is repeated, that they might take notice of it, and to assure them that so it would be.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall know that I [am] the Lord, &c.*] (See Gill on ²³¹⁰Ezekiel 11:10”);

for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments; which is the reason why the Lord would judge them on the border of Israel, and deliver them up into the hands of strangers; nor can he be thought to act the severe and cruel part to them, when this their disobedience is observed; since they had his statutes and his judgments made known to them, which were not known to other nations, and yet they regarded them not; wherefore it was but righteous in him to inflict his

judgments upon them; and which is the more aggravated by what follows, and which still more clearly shows the justice of the divine proceedings against them:

but have done after the manners of the Heathens that [are] round about you; or, “the judgments of the Heathens”^{f150}; regarded them, and acted according to them, when they slighted and disobeyed the judgments of the Lord; instead of worshipping of him according to his revealed will, they served the idols of the nations round about them, and gave into all their superstitious rites and ceremonies.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass when I prophesied, &c.]* Or, “as I prophesied”^{f151}; that is, while he was prophesying, or declaring the above things from the mouth of the Lord, concerning the slaughter of the Jews by the sword, and the captivity of the rest:

that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died; one of the princes of the people, and was among the five and twenty men the prophet saw at the door of the east gate of the temple, (²³¹⁰Ezekiel 11:1); this man dropped down dead on a sudden, just as Ananias and Sapphira at the feet of Peter, (⁴⁸⁸Acts 5:5,10). It was in a vision Ezekiel saw this, and in the temple; but no doubt at the same time this prince died at his own house, whose death was notified to the prophet in this way;

then fell I down upon my face; as greatly surprised at the event, and filled with concern at what would be the issue of this providence; looking upon it as a pledge and earnest, a token and forerunner, of the utter destruction of the people:

and cried with a loud voice; expressing the vehemency of his affection, and the earnestness of his supplication:

and said, ah, Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel? or, “art thou making?”^{f152} the ten tribes had been carried captive many years ago, and a large number of the other two tribes in Jeconiah’s captivity, so that there were but a remnant left in the land; and, upon the sudden and awful death of this prince, the prophet feared the Lord was going to make an utter end of them at once; which he deprecates.

Ver. 14. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, &c.]* In answer to his prayer. The Targum calls it,

“the word of prophecy from the Lord;”

this was by way of comfort to the captives in Babylon, as the former was by way of threatening to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 15. *Son of man, thy brethren, [even] thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, &c.*] Or, “of thy redemption”^{f153}; to whom the right of redemption of his lands and possessions belonged, as it did to those that were next akin. The Septuagint, by a mistake of the word, render it, “the men of thy captivity”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions, following them. It is true those were his fellow captives who are here meant; some of them that were carried captive were his brethren by blood, and all by nation and religion; and these phrases, and the repetition, of them, are designed not only to excite the prophet’s attention to, and to assure them of what is after declared; but to take off his concern for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had used his brethren ill, and to turn his thoughts and affections towards his friends in Chaldea. Kimchi thinks that these three expressions refer to three captivities; the captivity of the children of Gad and Reuben; the captivity of Samaria, or the ten tribes; and the captivity of Jehoiachin. It follows,

and all the house of Israel wholly [are] they; or,

“all the house of Israel, all of them,”

as the Targum; that is, all the whole house of Israel. The Septuagint render it, “all the house of Israel is made an end of”; the Syriac version, “shall be blotted out”; and the Arabic version, “shall be cut off”; all wrong; since these words are not a threatening to the ten tribes, or those of the Jews in captivity, for all that follows is in favour of them; but only point at the persons the prophet is turned unto, and who are the subject of the following discourse. A colon, or at least a semicolon, should be here put; since the accent “athnach” is upon the last word;

unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, get ye far from the Lord; Kimchi interprets it, from the land of the Lord, the holy land; they being carried captive into a foreign country. The Targum is,

“from the fear of the Lord;”

the worship of the Lord; they being at a distance from the temple, and the service of it. These words are an insult of the inhabitants of Jerusalem upon

the captives, suggesting that they were great sinners, and for their sins were taken away from their own land, and carried to Babylon; and that they deserved to be excommunicated from the house and people of God, and were so; and indeed this is a kind of a form of excommunication of them:

unto us is this land given in possession; you have forfeited your right to it, and are disinherited; we are sole heirs, and in the possession of it, and shall ever continue in it. The Syriac version reads this and the preceding clause as if they were the word of the Israelites to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, thus;

“because they said to them, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, depart from the Lord, for unto us is given this land for an inheritance.”

The Arabic version indeed makes them to be the words of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but render the last clause thus; “to you” (that is, “the Israelites”) “is given the land for an inheritance”.

Ver. 16. *Therefore say, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Since they were so insulted and ill treated by their brethren the Jews:

although I have cast them afar off among the Heathen; both the ten tribes, even all the house of Israel, who were carried into Assyria, and placed in the cities of the Medes, in Halath and Habor, by the river Gozan, (²⁷⁶2 Kings 17:6); and those of the Jews in Jeconiah’s captivity, among whom were Ezekiel, and his brethren, and his kindred:

and although I have scattered them among the countries; and therefore, what with the distance of the place where they were, and the dispersion of them among the people where they resided, their case might seem to be desperate; and that there was no probability, and scarce any possibility, of their being preserved as a people, and of their restoration to their own land:

yet will I be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come; their dwelling place, as he has been to his people in all generations their protection from all their enemies, in whom, and by whose power, they should be safe; and whose presence they should enjoy, though deprived of public ordinances, of temple worship and service; though they were at a distance from the great sanctuary, the temple, the inhabitants of Jerusalem boasted of, yet the Lord would make up the want of that to them with

himself. The Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi^{f154} interpret this of the synagogues, which were second to the temple, the Israelites had in foreign countries, where they prayed to the Lord, and worshipped him, and enjoyed his presence. It may be rendered, “the sanctuary of a few”^{f155}; they being but few, especially that were truly godly, that were carried captive: or, “a sanctuary for a little while”^{f156}; that is, during seventy years, and then they should be returned, as follows. The Targum is,

“I have given them synagogues, second to my sanctuary, and they are as few in the provinces where they are carried captive.”

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, I will even gather you from the people, &c.*] The Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, where they had been carried captive:

and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered; that is, out of Chaldea and Media, out of which they should come in a body, and not singly, or in small numbers, as they did when Cyrus issued out his proclamation:

and I will give you the land of Israel; not only the Jews of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but many of the ten tribes came out of Babylon with Zerubbabel, and settled in the land of Israel; and hither they came also in later times, even those that settled in other countries; at their several festivals, and about such time more especially that the Messiah was expected, and continued there; and this will have a fuller completion at the restoration of the Jews in the latter days.

Ver. 18. *And they shall come thither, &c.*] That those of the captivity shall come to the land of Israel, they or their posterity:

and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof; the idols of the nations, that had been there introduced, detestable to God and all good men:

and all the abominations thereof from thence; idols, as before, even all of them, so that idolatry should be wholly rooted out; this had its accomplishment under Zerubbabel, Ezra, Haggai, &c. when the worship of God was restored, and there was a reformation of many abuses in religion; and again in the times of the Maccabees; and will have a greater fulfilment at the time of the conversion of the Jews; when everything that is

detestable and abominable among that people will be removed; of which conversion the following words are a prophecy.

Ver. 19. *And I will give them one heart, &c.*] In opposition to a divided heart, (³⁸⁰²Hosea 10:2); divided between the true God and idols, wavering and halting between two opinions, sometimes serving God, and sometimes Baal; a heart to pursue one way of worship, and to serve the Lord with one shoulder or consent, (³⁸³⁰Jeremiah 32:40 ³⁸³⁹Zephaniah 3:9); a heart sincere to God and man, in opposition to a double or hypocritical one, (³⁹¹²Psalms 12:2); a heart single to the honour and glory of God, and firmly attached to his word and worship: also concord, harmony, an unity of affections to one another, so as to be of one heart and one soul, as the first Christians were, who were Jews, (⁴⁰⁴²Acts 4:32); and an unity of judgment, an oneness of principle and practice, as there ought to be, (⁴⁰¹⁰1 Corinthians 1:10); and all this is the gift of God, and flows from his grace and favour. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “another heart”; different from what they had before;

and I will put a new spirit within you; meaning either the Holy Spirit of God, the author of, regeneration and renovation: this is represented by the ancient Jews^{f157} as the same with the Spirit of the Messiah that moved upon the face of the waters, (⁰⁰⁰²Genesis 1:2); or the spirit of man, the seat of this renewing work; or rather the work itself, called “a new man”, “a new creature”, (⁴⁰²⁴Ephesians 4:24 ⁴⁰⁵⁷2 Corinthians 5:17); and this is a new frame and disposition of mind, in which are new principles of light and life, grace and holiness; a new understanding of themselves and state, of God and of Christ, of divine things and Gospel truths; new affections for God, and all that is good; new desires after grace and righteousness, after God and communion with him, after his word and ordinances, and conformity to Christ; new purposes and resolutions to serve the Lord, and glorify him; new delights and joys, and in short all things become new. Instead of “within you”, the Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions, read, “in them”; and to this the Targum agrees;

and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh; a heart hardened by sin, and confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life, senseless and stupid as to spiritual things; stubborn and inflexible, on which no impressions are made by corrections, admonitions, and instructions of superiors; and so an impenitent one: this God only can remove; men cannot soften their own hearts; nor can ministers work upon them; nor will judgments themselves

bring men to repentance: it is the work of God only; who does it by his word, with which he breaks the rock in pieces; by the discoveries of his love, with which he melts the heart that is harder than the nether millstone; by giving repentance to them, by working faith in them, to look to a crucified Christ and mourn, and all this by “his” Spirit: this is said to be taken “out of their flesh”; not their body, but their nature corrupted by sin, (²⁴¹¹⁵John 3:6); which shows that this hardness is natural to men, and rooted in them, and that it requires omnipotence to remove it;

and will give them an heart of flesh; a sensible and penitent one; a soft and tender one; a sanctified and spiritual one; one flexible and obsequious to the will of God; on which impressions are made; on which the laws of God are written; into which the doctrines of the Gospel are transcribed, Christ is formed, and the fear of God is implanted, with every other grace, all which are the gifts of God, and owing to his efficacious grace. The Targum of the whole is,

“and I will give them a fearing heart, and a spirit of fear I will put in their bowels (or in the midst of them); and I will break the heart of wickedness, which is as hard as a stone, out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart fearing before me to do my will.”

Ver. 20. *That they may walk in my statutes, &c.*] Have their conversation ordered according to the will and word of God; to which there is neither will nor power, till God gives a new heart and spirit, or works in them both to will and to do:

and keep mine ordinances, and do them; all things appertaining to religion and worship, both in public and private:

and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; it will appear by walking in the statutes of the Lord, and by keeping his ordinances, that they are his people, made willing in the day of his power to serve him; and by having covenant blessings bestowed on them, the grace of God wrought in them, his fear upon them, and new hearts and spirits given them, that he is their covenant God and Father; by this means, what under the prevalence of idolatry was hid, will now be made manifest.

Ver. 21. *But [as for them], &c.*] Who remained in Jerusalem, and were not carried captive, but continued in their, own land, and worshipped idols, the same as in (²⁴¹¹⁵Ezekiel 11:15);

whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations; not images of gold and silver, which cannot be said to have a heart; but devils and evil spirits worshipped in them, who are well pleased and delighted with the worship given them; so that the hearts of the devils worshipped, and the hearts of the idolatrous worshippers, were alike and agreed; wherefore their hearts were very different from those before mentioned; so far from having one heart, that their hearts were double and divided, partly after God, and partly after their idols; and so far from walking in the statutes of the Lord, that they were walking after the will of their idols, and in the worship of them; which were abominable and detestable to God, and all good men. The Targum is,

“and after the worship of their idols, and of their abominations, their heart wanders.”

I will recompense their ways upon their own heads, saith the Lord God, that is, punish them according to their deserts, by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity.

Ver. 22. *Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, &c.*] In order to remove, as in (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19);

and the wheels beside them; which were lifted up also along with the cherubim:

and the glory of the God of Israel [was] over them above; both cherubim and wheels.

Ver. 23. *And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, &c.*] Of Jerusalem, whither it was removed from the door of the east gate of the temple, (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19); though no mention is made of such removal; and now, having left the temple, it leaves the city:

and stood upon the mountain, which [is] on the east side of the city; either waiting for the repentance of the inhabitants of it, leaving them with reluctance; or in order to bring down his judgments upon it, and behold its destruction and ruin: this mountain was the mountain of Olives, as the Targum interprets it: and so Jarchi and Kimchi; (see ³⁸⁴⁵Zechariah 14:5). Christ stood on this mountain and wept over Jerusalem, and from hence he ascended to heaven. This Jarchi calls the third remove of the Shechinah or glory of the God of Israel. The Rabbins say^{f158} it removed ten times, and reckon them thus,

“from the mercy seat to the cherub; from the cherub to the cherub; from the cherub to the threshold; from the threshold to the court; from the court to the altar; from the altar to the roof; from the roof to the wall; from the wall to the city; from the city to the mountain; from the mountain to the wilderness; and from the wilderness it ascended and sat in its own place, according to (^{<315>}Hosea 5:15).”

Ver. 24. *Afterwards the spirit took me up*, &c.] From the east gate of the temple, whither he had brought him; when he had been shown, and everything had been told him, necessary for the reproof of the Jews in Jerusalem, and for the comfort of the captives:

and brought me in vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity; all this was done in vision; so it appeared to the prophet, under the influence of the divine Spirit of God, as if he was carried to Jerusalem, and there saw and heard all he did, and then was brought back again to Chaldea; whereas this was only mental, not corporeal; he was all the while in Chaldea, though things were so represented to his mind as if he had been removed from place to place:

so the vision that I had seen went up from me; he returned to himself, and became as another man, or as he was before; and found himself in his own house, and among the elders of Judah This shows that the vision was from heaven, and therefore it is said to go up from him; and that prophecy was not of the will of men, but of God; and that the prophets were not always under the influence of a prophetic spirit; but this came and went, and was only with them at certain times.

Ver. 25. *Then I spake unto them of the captivity*, &c.] The elders of Judah, and others with them, at Telabib, where the prophet had a house:

all the things the Lord had showed me; all the visions contained in the preceding chapters, from the beginning of the fourth chapter to the end of this: as the portraying Jerusalem on a tile, and lying on his side for a long time, as an emblem of the siege of that city; the barley cakes, denoting a famine; the sharp knife with which he cut off his hair, signifying the destruction of its inhabitants; how he was brought to Jerusalem, what idolatries he saw in the temple; the vision of the six men with slaughter weapons, and of another with a writer's inkhorn by his side; and also the vision of the cherubim and wheels, and the glory of the God of Israel, and their departure from the city and temple, together with what was

threatened to the Jews in Jerusalem, and was promised to them in Chaldea; all which the prophet faithfully related, and kept back nothing that the Lord had made known unto him by words or signs.