

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 13

This chapter begins with observing the different state and condition of Ephraim before and after his idolatry, (^{<28130>}Hosea 13:1); his increase in it, (^{<28132>}Hosea 13:2); and therefore his prosperity was very short lived, which is signified by various metaphors, (^{<28133>}Hosea 13:3); and his sins are aggravated by the former goodness of God unto him his great ingratitude unto God, and forgetfulness him, (^{<28134>}Hosea 13:4-6); hence he is threatened with his wrath and vengeance in a very severe manner, (^{<28137>}Hosea 13:7,8); for which he had none to blame but himself; yea, such was the grace and goodness of God to him, that though he had destroyed himself, yet there were help and salvation for him in him, (^{<28139>}Hosea 13:9); though not in his king he had desired, and was given, and was took away in wrath, (^{<28130>}Hosea 13:10,11); but his sin being bound up and hid, and he foolish and unwise, sharp corrections would be given him, (^{<28132>}Hosea 13:12,13); and yet a gracious promise is made of redemption from death and the grave by the Messiah, (^{<28134>}Hosea 13:14); but, notwithstanding this, and all his present prosperity, he would be blasted in his wealth and riches; and Samaria the metropolis of his country would he desolate; and the inhabitants of it be used in the most cruel manner, because of their rebellion against God, (^{<28135>}Hosea 13:15,16).

Ver. 1. *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel*, etc.] Or, with trembling, as Jarchi: so Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, spake before Solomon, a great king, as he observes. R. Moses the priest interprets it of Jeroboam; but it may be understood of the tribe in general, and especially of the heads of it, at anytime before it fell into idolatry; when they spake with submission and humility, they were attended to by the other tribes in all consultations and debates, and great deference was paid unto them; and they were find in great esteem, and highly honoured, agreeably to that common saying of our Lord, “he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”, (^{<28141>}Luke 14:11); or, “when [he] spake [there was] trembling”^{f259}; either the neighbouring nations, when he threatened them with war: or among the other tribes of Israel, when he spake in

counsel, and with authority, they rose up and heard him with great reverence and respect; (see ^{<1338>}Job 29:8-10). So the Targum,

“when anyone of the house of Ephraim spake, trembling laid hold on the people; they became princes in Israel.”

Some refer this to the times of Joshua, who was of that tribe, and whom the Israelites feared as they had feared Moses, (^{<1044>}Joshua 4:14); others to the times of Gideon and Jephthah, with whom the tribe of Ephraim expostulated, (^{<1000>}Judges 8:1 12:1); but others interpret it of Jeroboam’s idolatry, of his setting up the worship of the calves, which he did upon his exalting himself, and setting himself up as king of the ten tribes; and, in some agreement with this, Schmidt understands, by “trembling”, a terrible and horrible thing, idolatry, which he commanded and appointed; and which he “bore” or “carried”, as the word ^{f260} is interpreted by him, and may be; that is, his sin, and the punishment of it, which Jeroboam and his posterity did bear; and so it agrees with what follows:

but, or “and”,

when he offended in Baal, he died; or when he sinned, and became guilty of more idolatry still, by worshipping Baal, as well as the calves, which was done in the times of Ahab, (^{<1163>}1 Kings 16:31); when Ephraim or the kingdom or Israel fell into distresses and calamities, sunk in their grandeur and authority, declined in their wealth and riches, and were insulted by their enemies, particularly by Benhadad king of Syria, who sent to Ahab, and challenged his silver and gold, his wives and children, as his own, (^{<1203>}1 Kings 20:3,4); and so they gradually decreased in credit and reputation, in power and authority, in wealth and substance, and at last were delivered to the sword of the enemy, and to captivity, which was their civil death.

Ver. 2. *And now they sin more and more*, etc.] Since the times of Jeroboam, and also of Ahab, adding other deities to the calves, and to Baal, as follows; increasing the number of their idols, and their idolatrous sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies: this they did in the times the prophet, who prophesied after the times of as it is common with evil men and seducers to wax worse and worse, and to proceed to more ungodliness, and from evil to evil; such is the way of idolaters, they stop not, but run into greater absurdities and grosser idolatries:

and have made them molten images of their silver: which is to be understood, not of the calves, or of Baal, made of gold, which they

purchased with their silver; but of other images they had in their houses, or carried about with them, made of their silver, of their plate, which they melted and cast images of it, of whatsoever shape or form they pleased:

[and] idols according to their own understanding; which were entirely of man's device, and had nothing divine in them, either as to matter or form, but wholly the invention of the human brain; or, "according to their own likeness", as the Targum, and so other Jewish interpreters; after the form of a man, and yet were so weak and stupid as to account them gods:

all of it the work of the craftsmen; of silversmiths and founders, and such like artificers; the same, or of the same sort, with the craftsmen that made shrines for Diana, (~~41924~~ Acts 19:24,38); and therefore such a work, wrought by such hands, could never be a deity, or have anything divine in it; they must be as stupid and senseless as the work itself to imagine there should: and yet

they say of them; the false prophets, or the idolatrous priests, say of such idols:

let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves: let those that bring their sacrifices, or those that offer them, pay religious worship and adoration to the calves; which they signified by kissing the idols they sacrificed to, either their mouths, or their hands; or, if out of their reach, they kissed their own hands in token of honour to them; which rites were commonly used among the Heathens. Cicero^{f261} says at Agrigentum, where was a temple or Hercules, where the people not only used to show a veneration to his image by prayers and thanksgivings, but they used to kiss it. So Apuleius^{f262} speaks of a beautiful virgin, the report of whose beauty brought together a vast number of citizens and strangers; who, amazed at the sight of her, put their right hand to their mouths, the first finger resting upon the thumb erect, and gave her reverence with religious adoration, as if she had been the goddess Venus herself; and Minutius Felix^{f263} says of Caecilius, that, observing the image of Serapis (probably much like one of these calves), putting his hand to his mouth, according to the superstitious custom of the common people, with his lips smacked a kiss; and so Pliny^{f264} observes, in worshipping, the right hand is used for a kiss, turning about the whole body, which to do to the left was reckoned the more religious; hence it is observed^{f265} of Aemilius, a derider of and scoffer at things divine, that he would never make supplication to any god, nor frequent any temple; and if he passed by any place of worship, he reckoned it a crime to

put his hand to his lips by way of adoration, or on account of that; and it seems to have obtained as early as the times of Job among idolatrous people, that, upon the sight of the sun or moon, they immediately with their mouth kissed their hands; (see ^{<1812>}Job 31:26,27); hence Lucian^{f266}, speaking of the Indians, says, rising early in the morning, they worship the sun, not as we, who think the prayers are finished when the hand is kissed; and Tertullian^{f267}, addressing the Heathens in his time, thus bespeaks them, most of you, out of an affectation of worshipping the celestial bodies at the rising of the sun, move and quaver your lips; hence kissing is used for the worship of the Son of God, (^{<1912>}Psalm 2:12). Some read the words, “let those that sacrifice a man^{f268} kiss the calves”; as if it respected the abominable practice of sacrificing men to Moloch; or intimated that men were sacrificed to the calves at Bethel.

Ver. 3. *Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud*, etc.] Which, however promising it is, soon disappears when the sun is risen; signifying that the idolatrous Israelites, king, priests, and people, should be no more; their kingdom would cease, all their riches and wealth would depart from them, and they and their children be carried captive into a strange land:

and as the early dew it passeth away; as soon as the heat of the sun is felt, when the earth is left dry; so these people, though they seemed to be in great prosperity, and to be very fruitful in children, and in substance, and promised themselves much more; yet in a little time their land would become desolate, and they stripped of all that was dear and valuable to them these metaphors are used in (^{<2004>}Hosea 6:4);

as the chaff [that] is driven with a whirlwind out of the floor; signifying that these idolatrous people were like chaff, light and empty, useless and unprofitable, fit for nothing but burning; and that they would be driven out of their own land through the Assyrian, that should come like a whirlwind with great force and power, as easily and as quickly as chaff is drove out of a threshing floor of corn with a strong blast of wind; (see ^{<1905>}Psalm 1:5 ^{<2001>}Jeremiah 4:11-13 ^{<2105>}Daniel 2:35);

and as the smoke out of the chimney; which rises up in a pillar, and is so on dissipated by the wind, or dissolved into air; and is no sooner seen but it disappears; (see ^{<1902>}Psalm 68:2). All these similes show how easily, suddenly, and quickly, the destruction of this idolatrous nation would be brought about.

Ver. 4. *Yet I [am] the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt*, etc.] Which brought thee out from thence, as the Targum; and ever since, from that time to this, had shown a regard unto them, as the Lord their God, both in the wilderness, as later mentioned, and in the land of Canaan, where they had been continued, and followed with instances of goodness to that day, and yet find sinned in so gross a manner; which argued great ingratitude in them, and forgetfulness of the Lord, and his mercies:

and thou shalt know no God but me; they ought to have known, acknowledged, and worshipped no other god, as was enjoined them in the law: or, “thou knowest not”^{f269}; they did not know any other, which they in their own consciences were obliged to confess, if appealed to; however, they should know no other; by sad experience they would find that there was no other that could be of any service to them; their images and idols being unable to help them:

for [there is] no saviour besides me; that could save them out of their troubles, and deliver them out of their distresses; no other that is, or can be, the author, either of temporal or of spiritual and eternal salvation.

Ver. 5. *I did know thee in the wilderness*, etc.] Where there were no food nor drink, where were scorpions, serpents, and beasts of prey; there the Lord knew them, owned them, and showed a fatherly affection for them, and care of them; and fed them with manna and quails, and guided and directed them in the way, and protected and preserved them from their enemies, and from all hurt and danger. So the Targum explains it,

“I sufficiently supplied their necessities in the wilderness:”

in the land of great drought; or, “of droughts”^{f270}; the word is only used in this place; and is by Aben Ezra interpreted a dry and thirsty land; and so he says it signifies in the Arabic language and the same is observed by the father of Kimchi, and by R. Jonah^{f271}; but is by some rendered “torrid”^{f272}, or “inflamed”, as if it had the signification of a Hebrew word which signifies a flame: and the Targum takes it to be akin to another, which signifies to “desire”, rendering it,

“in a land in which thou desirest everything;”

that is, wants everything. The first seems best, and is a fit a description of the wilderness, which was a place of drought, wherein was no water, (^(-R85)Deuteronomy 8:15).

Ver. 6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled*, etc.] When they came into the land of Canaan, which was a land flowing with milk and honey, they were like a flock of sheep brought from short commons to a good pasture; and there they tilled themselves to the fail, and indulged to luxury and excess, pampered themselves, and made provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, and became carnal and sensual:

they were filled, and their hearts were exalted: they were elated with their plenty, and grew proud and haughty, and attributed their fulness not to the goodness of God, but to their own excellency and merit; and put their trust and confidence in their affluence, and not in the Lord; and thought themselves safe and secure, and out of all danger, and concluded it would never be otherwise with them:

therefore have they forgotten me; the Author of their beings, the Father of their mercies, and God of all their comforts; they forgot to give him praise and glory for their abundance; to place their trust and have their dependence on him, and to serve and worship him; this was the consequence of their luxury and pride. The Targum is,

“therefore they left my worship;”

they waxed fat, and kicked, and lightly esteemed and forsook the God and Rock of their salvation, (¹²⁷³Deuteronomy 32:15).

Ver. 7. *Therefore I will be unto them as a lion*, Because of their idolatry, ingratitude, luxury, and especially their forgetfulness of God, which is last mentioned, and with which the words are connected. By this and the following metaphors are set forth the severity of God’s judgments upon them for their sins, and their utter destruction by them. Some observe the word¹²⁷³ here used signifies an old lion, which, though slower in the pursuit of its prey, is more cruel when it has got it; (see ³⁸¹⁴Hosea 5:14);

as a leopard by the way will I observe [them]; which is a quick sighted, vigilant, crafty, and insidious creature, which lurks in trees, and watches for men and beasts that pass by the way, and seizes on them. The lion makes his onset more openly, this more secretly; and both express the various ways God would take in his providence to chastise these people for their sins, and that he would watch over them to do them hurt, as he had to do them good, and take the proper opportunity of doing it, and execute his purpose with great wrath and fury, to their utter ruin; (see ²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 5:6 44:27). The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render

it, “as a leopard by the way of Assyria”^{f274}, or “the Assyrians”; and so some interpreters take the sense to be, that God would watch them in their way to Assyria for help, and blast their designs, disappoint them of their expected assistance, and surprise them with his judgments; (see ^{<3153>}Hosea 5:13 7:11 8:9 ^{<3428>}Jeremiah 2:18,19); and there was a mountain in Syria, called the mountain of the leopards, where they used to haunt, and from whence they came out to take their prey, to which there is a reference in (^{<2448>}Song of Solomon 4:8); which was two miles from Tripoli (a city of Syria) northward, three from the city Arces southward, and one from Mount Lebanon^{f275}; and such is the vigilance and agility of leopards, that they will sometimes, as Pliny^{f276} says, mount thick trees, and hide themselves in the branches, and leap at once, and unawares, upon those that pass by, whether men or beasts, as before observed; wherefore, with great propriety, is this simile used. The Targum is, “my word shall be”, etc.

Ver. 8. *I will meet them as a bear [that is] bereaved of her whelps*, etc.] Which is a fierce cruel creature at any time, but especially when this is its case, being very fond of its whelps; and having taken a great deal of pains to lick them into form, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, it is the more enraged at the loss of them, and therefore falls upon man or beast it meets with the utmost fury: the phrase is expressive of the fiercest rage; (see ^{<3072>}Proverbs 17:12);

and will rend the caul of their hearts: the pericardium, which is a membrane or skin that encloses the heart, and which when pierced is immediate death: perhaps some respect is had to the closing of their hearts to God, the hardness of them against him and his ways, and their inattention to his word; and now he will open them, not in a way of grace and mercy, but of wrath and fury; as a bear, when it seizes a man, sticks his claws in his breast, tears it open, and makes his way at once to the heart, fetches it out, and sucks his blood:

and there will I devour them like a lion; either in their cities and houses, when taken by the enemy; or in the way, in which they would be observed; or in their captivity: or there may be put for then, and so denotes the time when he would be all this to them before mentioned, and then he would utterly destroy them:

the wild beast shall tear them: which literally is one of God’s sore judgments, but here figuratively designs the Assyrian, and who is meant as the instrument of God’s vengeance in all the other expressions; and is

sometimes compared to a lion, and that as concerned with Israel; (see ²⁸¹⁷Jeremiah 50:17); which is much better than by these four sorts of creatures to understand the four monarchies which Israel suffered by. The Targum is,

“my word shall meet them as a bear bereaved, and I will break the wickedness of their hearts, etc.”

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*, etc.] Though the Lord was a lion, a leopard, and a bear to them, yet their destruction was not owing to him, but to themselves; he was not chargeable with it, but they only; the fault and blame was theirs; their own sins brought it on them, and provoked him to such righteous wrath and vengeance before expressed: this is said to clear the Lord from any imputation of this kind, and to lay it where it should be. It may be rendered, “it hath destroyed thee”^{f277}; either the calf, as Kimchi, and the worshipping of that, their idolatry; or their king, as others, taking it from the following verse by way of anticipation; or rather it may refer to all their sins before observed, their idolatry, luxury, and ingratitude. Gussetius^{f278} thinks the word **yb** has the signification of “burning”, as in (²¹⁹⁴Isaiah 3:24); and renders it, “burning in me hath destroyed thee, [even] in him who is thy help”; that is, by their sins they had made God their enemy, who is a consuming fire, and whose burning wrath destroyed them, in whom otherwise they would have had help. Now though this may primarily regard the destruction of the civil state and kingdom of Israel for their sins, yet it may be applied to the spiritual and eternal state of men. Man is a lost, ruined, and undone creature; he is depraved and corrupted in his whole nature, soul and body; the image of God in him is marred and spoiled; there is no holiness in him, nor any righteousness upon him; no will nor power to that which is good; though he has not lost the natural liberty of his will, he has lost the moral liberty of it, and is a slave to his lusts, and a vassal to Satan; he has no true knowledge of that which is good, no inclination to it, nor strength to perform it he is dead in sin, and dead in law; he is under the curse of it, and in the open way to everlasting ruin and destruction; and is in himself both helpless and lifeless; and he is a self-destroyed creature; his destruction is not owing to Satan only, though he was an instrument of the ruin of mankind; nor to the first parents of human nature only, in whom all men naturally and federally were, in whom they sinned, and with whom they fell; but to their own actual sins and transgressions. However, their destruction is not to be charged upon God, or ascribed to any decree of

his, which is no cause of man's damnation, but sin only; nor to any sentence of condemnation passed by him, or the execution of it, which both belong to him as a righteous Judge; but to themselves and their sins, as is owned both by good men, who under true and saving convictions acknowledge their damnation would be just, if God should execute it on them; and by bad men, even the damned in hell; this will be the never dying worm, the remorse of a guilty conscience, that they have brought all this ruin on themselves;

but in me [is] thine help; not in themselves, not in any creature, but in the Lord alone; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, on whom his divine Father has laid the help of his people; and who has helped them, and saved them from their sins, the cause of their destruction, and from wrath, which they deserved by reason of them; and has brought them out of a wretched state, a pit wherein is no water, into a comfortable, glorious, and happy one, and delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies; and helps them to what they want, to holiness, righteousness, and strength; to all supplies of grace here, and glory hereafter. Some render the particle as causal, "for in me", etc.^{f279} and so make it to be a reason either proving that God could not be the cause of their destruction, because in him was their help, and in him only; or that their destruction was owing to themselves; "for in" or "against me, against thine help"; thou hast transgressed and rebelled; so Jarchi.

Ver. 10. *I will be thy King, where [is any other] that may save thee in all thy cities?* etc.] Governor, Protector, and Defender; and so confirming what is before said, that their help was in him: or, as the Targum, Abarbinel, and others^{f280}, "where is thy king now, that he may serve thee in all thy cities?" whom they had asked, rejecting the Lord, and in whom they had put their trust and confidence for help; and now either having no king, he being taken away from them by death, or by the enemy; or if they had, he being unable to help them in their distress; they are ironically asked where he was, that he might exert himself and save them, if he could, in all the cities of the land, where the enemy were come, a, a had besieged and took them:

and thy judges, of whom thou saidst give me a king and princes? that is; where are thy king and his nobles, his courtiers and his counsellors, and all judges, magistrates, and governors subordinate to him? let them arise for

thy help, if they can, by their policy or power, by their counsel, or by their arms; for judges and princes design such as were of the king's court and council, or acted in government under his direction and influence; for though these are not expressly mentioned, when they asked for a king, yet are implied; since there is no king without a court and nobles to attend him, to advise with, and to act under him. This refers to the story in (^{<OR6>}1 Samuel 8:6), etc. and seems to be the leading step to Israel's ruin and destruction as a state.

Ver. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger*, etc.] Not the king of Assyria, sent to waste and destroy them, and carry them captive, as some, for of him the next clause cannot be said; nor Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, as others, who was not given in anger to Israel, but to Solomon; rather Saul, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra, the first king of all Israel; and who was given at the request of the people, though in anger and resentment, they rejecting God their King; or it may design the kingly office and power in general, in a succession of kings from him the first of them:

and took [him] away in my wrath; not Jeroboam, who does not appear to be taken away by death in wrath; rather Saul, who died in battle with the Philistines, and fell on the mountains of Gilboa: but it may be rendered better, "I will take him away"^{f281}; and refers not to Zedekiah the last king of Judith, as some in Kimchi; but to Hoshea, the last king of the ten tribes; for it is of there more especially the words, both in the text and context, are spoken; and so it respects the entire removal of kingly power from them, which ceased in Hoshea; (see ^{<OR6>}Hosea 3:4 10:15).

Ver. 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim [is] bound up; his sin [is] hid.*] Which Kimchi restrains to the sin of the calves, and worshipping them; and others to the request of a king, the context speaks of: but it seems best to understand it in a more general sense of these, with all other sins, which were bound up, and not loosed, or were not remitted and forgiven, they being impenitent, and persisting in their sins; and which were bound up as in a bag or purse, in order to be opened and brought forth in proper time in open court, and be took cognizance of in a judiciary way; with which agrees an expression in (^{<SR47>}Job 14:17); or which were laid up among the treasures of divine omniscience, in the mind of God, and not forgotten by him, as they might be thought to be, and would in due time be brought to light, and vengeance took on them. So the Targum,

“the sins of the house of Ephraim are treasured up; they are reserved to punish all their offences;”

(see ^{<15234>}Deuteronomy 32:34).

Ver. 13. *The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him*, etc.] Upon Ephraim, or the ten tribes; that is, afflictions, distresses, and calamities, which are often in Scripture compared to the pains and sorrows of a woman in childbirth; and may denote the suddenness and inevitableness of them; (see ^{<23178>}Isaiah 13:8 ^{<3416>}Jeremiah 30:6,7). So the Targum,

“distress and trouble shall come upon them, as pains on a woman with child;”

which may respect the invasion of their land, the siege of Samaria, and their captivity;

he [is] an unwise son; taking no warning by his ancestors, by their sins, and what befell them on account of them, but persisting in his sins, and in impenitence and hardness of heart: so the Targum,

“he is not wise to know my fear:”

for he should not stay long in [the place of] the breaking forth of children: that is, in the womb, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; though the Targum and Jarchi understand it of the stool or seat of women in travail. The sense is, either that he is foolish and unwise, that he does not endeavour to extricate himself from these troubles; or rather to prevent them by repentance, by leaving his idols, and returning to the Lord; or that, should he do so, he would soon be delivered from all his sorrows, and not stay a moment longer in them. Though the words may be better rendered, “for he stays not”, or “would not stay, the time for the breaking forth of children”^{&f282}; now this time is the time of the Gospel dispensation, the time of the Messiah’s birth, the fulness of time appointed for his coming, and the time of the church’s ringing forth many children in a spiritual sense; (see ^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:1 ^{<4045>}Galatians 4:26,27); for which Ephraim or the ten tribes should have waited, but did not, which was their folly and their ruin; they did not “stand”, or continue, in the belief and expectation of the Messiah, and in the true worship of God, but left that, and served idols; and so continued not to the times of the Messiah, when the blessings mentioned in the following verse would be obtained and enjoyed; so Schmidt.

Ver. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave*, etc.] That is, “when” or “at which time” before spoken of, and here understood, as the above interpreter rightly connects the words, “I will” do this and what follows:

I will redeem them from death; these are the words, not of Jehovah the Father, as in (²⁰⁰⁷Hosea 1:7); but of the Son, who redeemed Israel out of Egypt, which was a typical redemption, (²⁸³⁴Hosea 13:4); in whom is the help of his people laid and found, (²⁸³⁵Hosea 13:9); the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; who is the true God, the mighty God, and so equal to this work of redemption and who is also the near kinsman of the redeemed as one of the words here used implies, and so to him belonged the right of redemption: the persons redeemed are not Israel after the flesh, but spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles; a special and peculiar people, chosen of God, and precious, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and who, in their nature state, are under sin, in bondage to it, and liable to the curse of the law, the wrath of God, hell and damnation; which are meant by the “grave” and “death”, and so needed a Redeemer to ransom them: for the word for “grace” should be rendered “hell”^{f283}, as it often is; and “death” intends not corporeal one only, but eternal death, or the second death; and both signify the wrath of God due to sin, and which God’s elect are deserving of, and Christ has bore, and delivered them from; and the curse of the law, which he has redeemed them from, being made a curse for them; and eternal death, the equivalent to which he has suffered, and so has saved them from it, and all this by redeeming them from their sins, the cause of it; and which he has done by giving a redemption or ransom price, which is his blood, his life, yea, himself, and which the first of the words here used imports. It is indeed true, that, in consequence of all this, there will be a redemption by him from a corporeal death, and from the grave; not as yet, for the ransomed of the Lord die as others, and are laid in the grave, the house appointed for all living; but in the resurrection morn there will be a redemption, a deliverance of the bodies of the saints from the grave, from mortality and corruption; yea, of them from the moral corruption of sin, and all the defilements of it, as well as from all afflictions and diseases, and from death itself, which shall have no more dominion over them; to which purpose the words are applied by the apostle; (see Gill on “⁴⁶⁵⁵1 Corinthians 15:55”); and so by some ancient Jews^{f284} to the Messiah, and his times;

O death, I will be thy plagues; O grace, I will be thy destruction; that is, the utter destruction of them for the plague or pestilence is a wasting destruction, (^{<3906>}Psalm 91:6); it is the same which in New Testament language is the abolishing of death, (^{<5010>}2 Timothy 1:10); which is true of eternal death with respect to the redeemed, which Christ's death is the death of, he having by his death reconciled them to God, and opened the way to eternal life for them, which he has in his hands to give unto them; and of corporeal death and the grave, which Christ has utterly destroyed with respect to himself having loosed the binds of death, and set himself free, and on whom that shall have no more dominion; and, with respect to his pie, he has destroyed him that had the power of it, which is the devil; he has put away and abolished sin, the cause of it; he has took away that which is its sting; so that it may be truly said, as the apostle quotes these words, "O death, where is thy sting?" he has removed the curse from it, and made it a blessing; he has abolished it as a penal evil, so theft it is not inflicted as a punishment on his people; and in the last day will entirely deliver them from the power of that, and of the grave; and then that which has slain its millions and millions, a number not to be numbered, will never slay one more: and that grave, which devoured as many, will never be opened more, or one more put into it; and then it may be said, "O grave, where is thy victory?" thou shall conquer no more, but be at an end; (see ^{<6155>}1 Corinthians 15:55);

repentance shall be hid from mine eyes; that is, the Lord will never repent of his decree of redemption from hell, death, and the grave; nor of the work of it by Christ; nor of the entire destruction of these things; which being once done, will never be repented of nor recalled, but remain so for ever.

Ver. 15. *Though he be fruitful among [his] brethren*, etc.] This is not spoken of Christ, as some think, who take the words to be a continuation of the prophecy concerning the Redeemer, who should increase his brethren, and bring many to him; and be as noxious to hell and death as the east wind is to persons and things, and dry up the fountains and springs of hell and death; the sins of men he should abolish, and be victorious over all his enemies, and divide their spoils: but they are rather the words of Christ himself concerning Ephraim, in connection with (^{<2813>}Hosea 13:13); expressing his character and state, and explaining the sorrows and calamities that should come upon him for his folly, in not staying the time of the breaking forth children; and to be understood either of his spiritual

fruitfulness in the last days; when Israel shall return to the Lord by repentance, and believe in the true Messiah, and bring forth the fruit of good works, as an evidence of it, along with their brethren, those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and so all Israel should be saved; which yet should not hinder the distresses and destruction that should come upon the ten tribes by the Assyrians, afterwards declared: or rather of his political fruitfulness, in allusion to his name; increasing in numbers, abounding in power and authority, in wealth and riches; either before the sin of the calves, as Kimchi, before he fell into idolatry; or afterwards, particularly in the times of Jeroboam the second, who enlarged the border of Israel; and in later times, when the kings of Israel entered into alliance with the Assyrians, and enjoyed peace and prosperity, and thought themselves secure of the continuance of it. Some render it, “because he is fierce”^{f285}; or “like a wild ass’s colt”; not only foolish and unwise, but fierce and unruly among his brethren, and would not stay the time of the breaking forth of children: therefore

an east wind shall come: which is very vehement, cold, blasting, and exceeding noxious and pernicious to fruit; meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria, who came from the east; his kingdom, the land of Assyria, lying, as Kimchi observes, eastward to the land of Israel. So the Targum,

“now will I bring against him a king strong as a burning wind;”

so the king of Babylon and his army are compared to a strong and violent wind, (²⁰¹¹Jeremiah 4:11-13);

the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness; the same is called the “wind of the Lord”, partly to denote the strength and vehemency of it, as mountains of the Lord, and cedars of the Lord, signify great and mighty ones; and partly to show that this enemy would come at the call of the Lord, by his direction and appointment. So the Targum,

“by the word of the Lord, through the way of the wilderness shall he come up;”

this circumstance, “from the wilderness”, is mentioned, not only because winds from thence usually blow more strongly and violently, but because the way from Assyria to the land of Israel lay through a wilderness;

and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up; his land wasted and destroyed; his fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, trodden

down and ruined, which yielded a large increase; trade and commerce stopped, and so all the springs and fountains of wealth and riches dried up; as well as their wives and children destroyed, as often mentioned, which were the source and spring of their continuance as a people in ages to come;

he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels; not Christ, nor Ephraim, but the Assyrian; who, entering into their cities, would plunder them of all their “vessels of desire”^{f286}, or desirable ones; their vessels of gold and silver; all their rich household goods and furniture of value; all their wealth and riches treasured up by them, their gold, silver, precious stones, rich garments, etc. So the Targum,

“he shall destroy the house of his treasures, and shall lay waste the city of his kingdom; he shall spoil the treasures, all vessels of desire.”

Ver. 16. *Samaria shall become desolate*, etc.] With this verse the fourteenth chapter begins in the Hebrew copies, and in the Targum, and in many versions; but seems better to conclude the present chapter; since it is in close connection with (^{<2815>}Hosea 13:15), and explains the figurative expressions there used. Samaria was the head of Ephraim, (^{<2809>}Isaiah 7:9); or the metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel; whose desolation is here prophesied of, and was accomplished by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, signified by the east wind; by whom it was not only besieged and taken, but very probably its houses were demolished, its walls broken down, and razed to the very foundation; (see ^{<2715>}2 Kings 17:5,6); and, as this was the head city, it may be put for all the rest, and even for the whole land, which was at the same time laid waste. The Targum is,

“Samaria shall be guilty;”

that is, shall be found guilty of many sins; her transgression shall be revealed, as Jarchi, become manifest by the just punishment inflicted on her;

for she hath rebelled against her God; and bitterly provoked him to wrath and anger, as the word^{f287} signifies; by relinquishing him and his worship, and by serving idols, the calves at Daniel and Bethel, Baal and other idols; when the Lord was their God, not only by creation, as of all men, but by the choice he made of them, and the covenant he made with them; by a national adoption of them, attended with various blessings and privileges,

and by their profession of him; all which were an aggravation of their rebellion against him;

they shall fall by the sword: the inhabitants of Samaria, and of the land, particularly the men thereof; and especially their armed men, their men of war, that fought for them, and defended them; these should fall by the sword of the Assyrian;

their children shall be dashed to pieces; against stones, walls, and pavements; who should have perpetuated their name to future ages, and inherited their possessions:

and their women with child shall be ripped up; things which are often done by cruel enemies, when cities are sacked and plundered; and which Shalmaneser might be provoked unto by the perfidy of the king of Israel, and by the city of Samaria holding out a three years' siege. This, though we have no account of as done at that time, yet no doubt was; even as the same things are predicted of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and which were to be done to them, in retaliation for them, though there is no narrative of them; (see ^{<19708>}Psalm 137:8,9 ^{<23316>}Isaiah 13:16,18).