

# CHAPTER 9

## INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 9

This chapter contains a prophecy, partly of comfort to the church and people of God, against the calamities predicted in the preceding chapter (<sup>(-2388)</sup>Isaiah 8:1-22); and partly of punishment, to be inflicted upon the ungodly Israelites by their enemies. The comfort promised arises from the appearance of Christ, the great light, in some certain places of the land mentioned, said before to be afflicted, (<sup>(-2300)</sup>Isaiah 9:1,2) which would occasion a joy among them; illustrated by some similes, by the joy in harvest, and at the dividing of spoils, (<sup>(-2308)</sup>Isaiah 9:3) the cause of which is a deliverance from a burdensome yoke of tyranny and bondage, wrought in like manner as that by Gideon formerly; different from all other salvations, which are usually obtained with noise and blood, (<sup>(-2304)</sup>Isaiah 9:4,5) the author of which is the Messiah; who is described by his birth as man, and by his divine sonship as God; or by his person, having two natures united in him; and by the government devolved on him; and by his several names, which express the greatness and glory of his person and office; and by the increase and administration of his government, (<sup>(-2306)</sup>Isaiah 9:6,7) then follows a denunciation of judgment on Israel, (<sup>(-2308)</sup>Isaiah 9:8) the instruments of which are pointed at, (<sup>(-2311)</sup>Isaiah 9:11,12), and the persons described that should suffer, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, (<sup>(-2314)</sup>Isaiah 9:14,15,17) the reasons of it, their making light of former corrections, (<sup>(-2309)</sup>Isaiah 9:9,10) their impenitence and hardness under chastenings, (<sup>(-2313)</sup>Isaiah 9:13) their going astray by means of their leaders; and their hypocrisy and wickedness, (<sup>(-2316)</sup>Isaiah 9:16-18) all which would occasion the wrath of God to burn against them, and consume them, (<sup>(-2318)</sup>Isaiah 9:18,19) yea, through hunger and want of provisions, should destroy one another, (<sup>(-2311)</sup>Isaiah 9:20,21).

**Ver. 1.** *Nevertheless, the dimness [shall] not [be] such as [was] in her vexation, &c.]* The words may be rendered, “for there shall be no weariness to him that straitens” or “afflicts” them<sup>f152</sup>; so Jarchi, who interprets it of the king of Assyria; but it is better to understand it of Titus Vespasian, who would not be weary of, but indefatigable in carrying on the

siege of Jerusalem, and in distressing the Jews in all parts: or thus, “for there shall be no fleeing from him that is oppressed in it”<sup>f153</sup>; either that is besieged in Jerusalem, or distressed in Judea; and so the words are a reason of the former distress, and a continuation and amplification of it; though many interpreters think they are to be understood by way of comfort, and as a mitigation of it, which is the sense of our version:

*when at first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali*; either by Pul king of Assyria, in the reign of Menahem king of Israel, (<sup><12159></sup>2 Kings 15:19,20) or rather by Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria, in the reign of Pekah king of Israel, since by him Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali, were carried captive, (<sup><12159></sup>2 Kings 15:29) which at the time of this prophecy was past, and was but a light affliction in comparison of what followed:

*and afterwards did more grievously afflict [her]*: by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, in the reign of Hoshea king of Israel, who took Samaria, and carried Israel or the ten tribes into captivity, from whence they returned not; and yet it is suggested, that the tribulation and distress that should come upon the Jews by the Romans should be greater than the heaviest of these; there should be no fleeing, no escape, no, not of any, as at those times mentioned, but wrath should come upon them to the uttermost, and particularly in the places following:

*by the way of the sea*; which some understand of the Mediterranean sea, and of that part of the land of Israel which lay next it; but it seems rather to design the sea of Tiberias or Galilee, as Jarchi rightly interprets it:

*beyond Jordan*; a part of the land of Israel so called, known by the name of Perea; (see Gill on <sup><41025></sup>Matthew 4:25”):

*in Galilee of the nations*; which was inhabited not only by Jews, but by persons of other nations, and therefore so called; now these places suffered much in the wars between the Jews and the Romans, by skirmishes, sieges, robberies, plunders, &c. as appears from the history of Josephus. Some interpreters understand all this, as before observed, as an alleviation of those times of trouble, as if it would be less than in former times; but it is certain that it was to be, and was, greater than ever was known, (<sup><41221></sup>Matthew 24:21,22) it is true, indeed, it may be considered as an alleviation of it, and as affording some comfort in a view of it, that in those very parts where there should be so much distress and misery, the Messiah,

previous to it, would appear, and honour it with his presence, who is afterwards spoken of, and so, in connection with the following words, these may be rendered thus; as by De. Dieu, “but obscurity shall not be brought to it” (the land) “to which distress is brought; as at the first time he caused reproach towards the land of Zebulun, and towards the land of Naphtali, so in the last” (time) “he will give glory by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, on the border of the nations”: and if it be asked what that glory should be, the answer is, “the people that walked in darkness”, &c. and so the sense may be, that whereas the inhabitants of Zebulun and Naphtali, and all Galilee, were lightly esteemed of, being mean and illiterate, not famous for any arts or sciences, and having no prophet among them, should, in the days of the Messiah, be highly honoured, and made glorious by his presence, ministry, and miracles among them<sup>f154</sup>. (see ~~<04B>~~ Matthew 14:13-15), where it is quoted, and applied to Christ’s being in those parts.

**Ver. 2.** *The people that walked in darkness*, &c.] Meaning not the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, in the times of Hezekiah, when Sennacherib besieged them, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; and much less the people of Israel in Egypt, as the Targum paraphrases it; but the inhabitants of Galilee in the times of Christ; (see ~~<016>~~ Matthew 4:16) (~~<04B>~~ John 1:48 7:49,52) and is a true character of all the people of God before conversion, who are in a state of darkness, under the power of sin, shut up in unbelief; are in gross ignorance of themselves, and their condition; of sin, and the danger they are exposed to by it; of divine and spiritual things; of the grace of God; of the way of peace, life, and salvation by Christ; and of the work of the blessed Spirit; and of the truths of the Gospel; they are in the dark, and can see no objects in a spiritual sense; not to read the word, so as to understand it; or to work that which is good; and they “walk” on in darkness, not knowing where they are, and whither they are going; and yet of these it is said, they

*have seen a great light*; Christ himself, who conversed among the Galilaeans, preached unto them, and caused the light of his glorious Gospel to shine into many of their hearts; by which their darkness was removed, so that they not only saw Christ, this great light, with their bodily eyes, but with the eyes of their understanding; who may be called the “light”, because he is the author and giver of all light, even of nature, grace, and glory; and a “great” one, because he is the sun, the greatest light, the sun of righteousness, the light of the world, both of Jews and Gentiles; he is the

true light, in distinction from all typical ones, and in opposition to all false ones, and who in his person is God over all.

*They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death*; as Galilee might be called, because it was a poor, miserable, and uncomfortable place, from whence no good came; and this character fitly describes God's people in a state of nature and unregeneracy, who are dead in Adam, dead in law, and dead in trespasses and sins, dead as to the spiritual use of the powers and faculties of their souls; they have no spiritual life in them, nor any spiritual sense, feeling, or motion; and they "dwell", continue, and abide in this state, till grace brings them out of it; (see ~~4126~~ John 12:46):

*upon them hath the light shined*: Christ in human nature, through the ministration of his Gospel, by his spirit, so as to enlighten them who walk in darkness, and to quicken them who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, and to comfort them in their desolate estate; and this light not only shone upon them in the external ministration of the word, as it did "upon" the inhabitants in general, but it shone "into" the hearts of many of them in particular, so that in this light they saw light.

**Ver. 3.** *Thou hast multiplied the nation, &c.*] With light, knowledge, honour, and glory, even Galilee of the nations before mentioned, the land of darkness, and of the shadow of death, where the people dwelt; on whom Christ, the light, shone in the ministration of his Gospel to them; whereby the number of believers in Christ were multiplied; and indeed, as he conversed, preached, and wrought his miracles most here, he had here the greatest number of disciples and followers; here were the five hundred brethren by whom he was seen at once, after his resurrection, (~~4356~~ 1 Corinthians 15:6 ~~4187~~ Matthew 28:7,10,16) for this is not to be understood of the Assyrian nation, whose army under Sennacherib was very large; nor of the Jewish nation enlarged by the destruction of that army, or of their increase after their return from the Babylonish captivity; nor of the church of God by the accession of Gentiles to it; but of the land or nation before spoken of:

*[and] not increased the joy*; or rather, as it should be rendered, "and hast increased joy unto it"; following the Keri; or marginal reading, which directs that it should be read, not as a negative, **al** "not", but **wl** , "to it"; and which is followed by the Targum and Syriac version, and by Jarchi,

Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, and others; and the sense of the words requires this reading, since it follows,

*they joy before thee*; or otherwise there would be a manifest contradiction in the text; though some, to avoid it, read the words interrogatively, “hast thou not increased the joy?” thou hast; and in this way both the Keri and the Cetib, the reading and the writing, may be taken in, “hast thou not increased joy unto it?” and so as Gussetius<sup>f155</sup> renders it,

“thou hast multiplied the nation to whom thou hadst not given great joy:”

that is, temporal joy; though now much of that which is of a spiritual kind: Christ the light appearing, his Gospel being preached by him, and his apostles, and many believing in him, occasioned an increase of spiritual joy in those parts; and so it is, that wherever the Gospel comes, and Christ is preached, and souls are converted, there is great joy, (~~406~~ Acts 8:6,8 13:48) where there is any grace of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love, there is joy; and particularly when a soul is enlightened and quickened, as in the preceding verse (~~202~~ Isaiah 9:2), it rejoices, reflecting on the state of darkness and death it is brought out of, and on the marvellous light, life, and liberty it is brought into; and at a sight of Christ, his person, offices, relations, and grace, as the sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings, and beaming light, salvation, and happiness; which joy is spiritual, internal, passes knowledge, is imperfect, but capable of being increased:

*they joy before thee*; the words, both in this and in the preceding clauses, are addressed to God, and show, that as the work of conversion, and an increase of spiritual joy, are from him; so that joy that is given by hint is expressed “before” him, in his house and ordinances, and it is in his sight, before whom all things are manifest; and so it denotes the truth and sincerity of it, which is illustrated by the following metaphors:

*according to the joy in harvest*; such as is expressed by men in harvest time, both by the rich owners and proprietors, when they have a good harvest, and well got in, and by the poor, who have a prospect of a comfortable supply in a cheap manner; and this simile is used with great propriety and pertinence. Christ and his ministers are sowers of seed, of the word; and hearers of the word are compared to seed sown in different places; and when any number of these are converted, it is a harvest which occasions joy. The Targum is,

“as the joy of conquerors in war;”

which agrees with what follows:

*[and] as [men] rejoice when they divide the spoil;* taken in war: in redemption, Christ has taken the prey from the mighty, and delivered the lawful captive, and has divided the spoil with the strong; and in effectual calling binds the strong man armed, and spoils his goods, and delivers souls out of his hands, and this is matter of great joy, (<sup><25312></sup>Isaiah 53:12 <sup><21121></sup>Luke 11:21,22) (see <sup><43162></sup>Psalms 119:162).

**Ver. 4.** *For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden,* &c.] Of Galilee, of the nation multiplied, of the spiritual inhabitants of it, whose joy was increased; and this is one reason of it, because they were delivered by the Lord from the burdensome yoke of the ceremonial law, which was broken off and abolished by Christ; and from the tyranny of Satan, the god of this world, out of whose hands they were ransomed and delivered; and from the dominion of sin, under the power of which they had been in bondage.

*And the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor;* different phrases, expressive of the same thing; the bondage and slavery of the law, sin, and Satan:

*as in the day of Midian;* when Gideon got an entire victory over the Midianites, with a few unarmed men, by the sound of trumpets, and breaking of pitchers, (<sup><00716></sup>Judges 7:16-22) and may denote the easy manner in which Christ obtained a conquest over all his and our enemies; and the means by which it is made known unto us, and we are freed from bondage to spiritual enemies; namely, by the ministration of the Gospel, compared to the blowing of trumpets; and which is a treasure put into earthen vessels, frail and weak men.

**Ver. 5.** *For every battle of the warrior [is] with confused noise,* &c.] With the sound of the trumpet and as now with beating of drums, and the huzzas and shoutings of the soldiers, the stamping and neighing of horses, the rushing of chariots, and rumbling of wheels, and the clashing of swords, spears, and shields, and these sometimes striking one against another<sup>f156</sup>:

*and garments rolled in blood;* of them that were slain in battle:

*but [this] shall be with burning [and] fuel of fire;* which refers either to the sudden destruction of the Midianites, or rather to the quick and easy

conquest that Christ obtained over sin, Satan, the world, and death; which was as soon over as any combustible matter is burnt with fire. Some interpret this of the destruction of the devil, his angels, of antichrist, and all wicked men by fire, at the last day; and others think that this last clause is to be read in connection with the preceding: “and garments rolled in blood, which shall be for burning, the fuel of fire”<sup>f157</sup>; that is, which garments rolled in blood shall be burnt with fire, and utterly consumed; and so there be no more war, but perpetual peace. It was usual after victory to burn the armour and spoils of the enemy<sup>f158</sup>; or rather it may intend the burning love and flaming zeal and affection of Christ the Saviour, next described (<sup>2195</sup>Isaiah 9:5).

**Ver. 6.** *For unto us a child is born*, &c.] This is a reason of all that is said in the context; of the great light that shone upon and was seen by those that sat in darkness, and in the land of the shadow of death; of the great joy among the people; of the breaking off of the yoke, rod, and staff of the oppressor; and of the burning of garments rolled in blood, so putting an end to war, and establishing peace; all which is owing to the child here said to be born, by whom we are to understand the Messiah; as the Targum interprets it; and not Hezekiah, as many of the Jewish writers<sup>f159</sup> apply it; who could never be represented as a child just born, when he was, at least, ten or eleven years of age when this prophecy was given out, and twenty nine when Sennacherib came up with his army against him, as Aben Ezra observes; to which time he and others refer the context; nor can any reason be assigned why he should be called a “son”, in such a peculiar and unusual manner; nor can it be said of him, that he was the great light which shined upon the inhabitants of Galilee; nor was his birth the occasion of so great joy as the birth of this child is said to be; nor can it, with any justness, be said of him, that of the increase of his government and peace there was no end; seeing his government only extended to the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and his reign was but twenty nine years, and for the most part attended with affliction, oppression, and war; besides, the many august titles here used cannot be ascribed unto him, nor to any mere creature whatever<sup>f160</sup>; but everything agrees with Christ; and to him it is applied, even by some ancient and modern writers among the Jews<sup>f161</sup> themselves. This clause respects his humanity, his incarnation and birth, which is spoken of in the present tense, though future, because of the certainty of it; that he should really become man, assume a true body, and a reasonable soul, partake of the same flesh and blood with the children, be made flesh,

and dwell among us: and this was to us, *wnt* , “for us”: for our good, for our profit and advantage; not for angels, but for men; for the saints under the Old Testament, and under the New; for all his people, his brethren, and children; that they might have a sanctified nature; that law and justice might be satisfied in that nature which had sinned, and Satan be ruined by it, which he himself had ruined; and that Christ might be a fit Mediator and Redeemer of his people, and be capable of executing his several offices to our advantage; his priestly office, by satisfying and interceding for us; his prophetic office, by teaching us; and his kingly office, by ruling over us; and that he might answer the relations he stands in of a father, husband, brother, and friend:

*unto us a son is given*: even he who is the Son of God, his own Son, his only begotten Son, his beloved Son, the dear Son of his love; all which aggravate his love in the gift of him, to be the covenant and head unto us, to be the Saviour of us, and a sacrifice for us; and in delivering him up into the hands of men, justice, and death; this is a free gift of God’s love, a very large and comprehensive one, is unparalleled and unspeakable, unchangeable and irreversible.

*And the government shall be upon his shoulder*: not only of the world in general, but of the church in particular; this child is born to royal dignity; he is King of saints; his government consists in ruling in the hearts of his people, in enacting laws for them, and causing them to submit unto them, in subduing their enemies, in protecting them, their persons and properties, rights and liberties, and in supplying them with everything necessary; and this government is delegated to him from his Father, is devolved upon him by him, is not of this world, but is spiritual; it is righteously administered, is peaceable, and will continue for ever: and its being said to be “upon his shoulder” is an allusion to magistrates having a key or rod laid on their shoulders, as ensigns of their office, or carried by their officers for them, (see <sup>2300b</sup> Isaiah 9:4 22:21) and it shows that it was laid upon him, or enjoined him by his father, though not against his will; and it denotes a weight of honour and care bore by him, whose shoulders are fit for the same, and equal to it; and that he is the prop and support of his church and people, who are safe under his government and protection:

*and his name shall be called Wonderful*: not that he should be commonly called among men by this name, nor by any of the following; but that he should appear to be, or to have that in him, or to do what would



sufficiently answer to this name, and to the rest: he is wonderful in his person, and in the glory and beauty of it; that he should be God and man in one person, and have two natures, so different from each other, united in him; that he, being truly God, should become man; and that he should be born of a virgin; wonderful in the disposition of his mind, and in the qualities he is possessed of; in his love to his people, and his sympathy with them; in his humility, meekness, and patience; in his wisdom, conduct, courage, and greatness of soul: wonderful in his life; in his private life many wonderful things are recorded of him; as the direction of the wise men to him by a star, and their worshipping of him; the preservation of him from Herod's cruelty; his disputation with the doctors in the temple at twelve years of age; and his living such a mean and obscure life for thirty years together: and his public life was nothing but a continued series of wonders; his baptism in Jordan; his temptations in the wilderness; his doctrines and miracles, and his transfiguration on the mount: wonderful in his death; that he should die at all, who is the Prince of life, the Lord of life and glory; that he should die with his own and his Father's consent, and that for sinners, even the chief of sinners; and by dying procure life for us; abolish death; destroy him that had the power of it, the devil; and obtain eternal salvation and redemption: the circumstances attending his death were marvellous: such as the darkness that was upon the earth; the rending of the vail, and cleaving of the rocks: wonderful in his resurrection from the dead, which was by his own power, before he saw corruption, at the time signified by types and prophecy, and with the same body exceedingly glorious; and which has an influence on our justification, regeneration, and resurrection: wonderful in his ascension to heaven, both in the manner of it, in a cloud, and in the effects of it, receiving gifts for men, and giving them to them; in his entrance into heaven; session at the right hand of God; and intercession for transgressors: wonderful he will be in his second coming to judgment; the signs of it are many and marvellous; the manner of it wonderfully glorious; the different effects of it on men, filling some with joy, and others with terror; and the things that will then be done; as the raising of the dead; placing all nations before him; separating the righteous from the wicked; pronouncing their distinct sentences, and executing them; in a word, Christ is wonderful, in all he is, has, or belong unto him; in his person, offices, and relations; in his people, who are for signs and wonders; in his doctrines and ordinances; and in the manifestations of himself and of his grace to his people, now and hereafter; nay, the word signifies not only "wonderful",

but a “miracle” itself, as Christ is in his person<sup>f162</sup>, (see <sup><07317></sup>Judges 13:17-19):

*Counsellor*; this some read in conjunction with the former title, thus, “Wonderful Counsellor”; so the Arabic version; and the Septuagint, which calls him, “the Angel of the great council”; and the Targum is,

“who does wonderfully in council;”

and which agrees with (<sup><2389></sup>Isaiah 28:29). This title belongs to Christ, as concerned with his Father, and the blessed Spirit, in the works of nature, providence, and grace. God stands in no need of counsel, nor does it properly fall on him, though it is sometimes ascribed to him, speaking after the manner of men. Creatures are not of his council, but Christ is; he was privy to all his thoughts, purposes, and decrees; he was consulted in creation, and in the works of providence, (<sup><0025></sup>Genesis 1:26) (<sup><01107></sup>Genesis 11:7) and in the great affair of redemption and salvation; the council held concerning that is the great council the Septuagint version here makes mention of; and may be called the council of peace, (<sup><3063></sup>Zechariah 6:13) in which the scheme of salvation was fixed; the author of it was found, and pitched upon; the way of it agreed on, to be through the assumption of human nature, and by obedience, sufferings, and death; and the time of Christ’s incarnation and death settled, as well as all blessings of grace and glory, for the persons who were to share in this salvation. This title also agrees with Christ in respect to his people, to whom he is council, and for whom he is council; he is council to them; he gives them council; so he did in person, when on earth; he advised sinners to repentance; encouraged souls to believe in him; directed the weary to come to him for rest; the hungry and thirsty for food; such as were healed and pardoned, he counselled them to sin no more; and he advised his followers to do to all men as they would men should do to them; to behave in an humble and modest manner; to bear reproaches and persecutions cheerfully; to love one another; and to pray to his Father, in his name, for all things they wanted: and now he gives his people counsel by the ministry of the word, which is the counsel of God, the produce of his wisdom, a transcript of his eternal council and covenant, a declaration of the will of God, and of Christ; and in which Christ counsels the poor in spirit to come to him for riches, the naked for clothing, the ignorant for spiritual light and knowledge, such as are ready to perish for salvation; and he counsels those that believe to abide in him, and by his truths and ordinances; which

counsel is wholesome and suitable, hearty, sincere, and faithful; is wise and prudent, and freely given; and which being taken, infallibly succeeds: he is council for them in heaven; he appears there in the presence of God for them; represents their persons, and presents their petitions; answers to all charges exhibited against them; and, as their advocate, pleads their cause; and calls for blessings agreed to be bestowed upon them, which they want; for all which he is abundantly qualified, being the only wise God, the Ancient of days, the Father of his people; and, as Mediator, the Wisdom of God, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are, and on whom the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and might, rests:

*the mighty God*; or “God the mighty One”<sup>f163</sup>; as some read the words with a comma; but if read together, the sense is the same; Christ is God, truly and properly so; as appears from his name Jehovah, which is peculiar to the most High; from his nature and perfections, being the same with his Father’s: from the works performed by him, as those of creation, providence, miracles, redemption, resurrection from the dead, &c.; and from the worship given him, which only belongs to God; also he is called our God, your God, their God, my God, by which epithets those that are not truly God are never called; he is said to be God manifest in the flesh; God over all, blessed for ever; the great God, the living God, the true God, and eternal life; and he is “the mighty One” as appears by the works he did, previous to his incarnation; as the creation of all things out of nothing; the upholding of all things by the word or his power; the management of all the affairs of providence, there being nothing done but what he was concerned in; as the confusion of languages; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt; leading and going before them through the Red Sea and wilderness; and bearing and carrying them all the days of old: and also by the works he did when here on earth; as his miracles, called his mighty works; such as healing all manner of diseases by a word speaking, or by touching the person, or by the person touching him, even his garment, or without seeing the person at all, and always without the use of medicines; dispossessing devils out of the bodies of men; power over the elements, as to change water into wine, rebuke the wind and seas, &c.; raising the dead, and even his own body when dead; and, above all, the great work of redemption, by which he appears to be the mighty One indeed; his Father’s call of him to it shows it; his undertaking it confirms it; and his actual performance of it puts it out of all doubt; as well as what

was then done by him; such as bearing all the sins of his people; engaging with all their enemies; conquering them, and delivering them out of their hands: likewise by what he does now, partly in the conversion of his people; quickening men dead in trespasses and sins; causing dry bones to live; giving spiritual sight to such as were born blind; plucking out of the hands of Satan, and turning from his power to God; which shows him to be stronger than the strong man armed; beginning, carrying on, and finishing the work of faith with power on them; as well as at first making them willing to submit to his righteousness and to be saved by him; and partly in his care of them afterwards; he having the government of them on his shoulders; supplying all their wants; bearing all their burdens; and supporting them under all their afflictions, temptations, and desertions; protecting them from all their enemies; strengthening them to do his will and work; and keeping them from falling totally and finally, and preserving them safe to his everlasting kingdom and glory: moreover, by what he will do hereafter; binding Satan, and confining him for the space of a thousand years; clearing the world of all his and his people's enemies; raising the dead; and judging the world; and destroying wicked men and devils with an everlasting destruction.

*The everlasting Father*; which does not design any relation of Christ in the Godhead; and there is but one Father in the Godhead, and that is the first Person; indeed Christ and the Father are one, and the Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he that has seen the one has seen the other, and yet they are distinct, Christ is not the Father; the Son and Spirit may be considered with the first Person as Father, in creation and regeneration, they being jointly concerned therein, but not in the Trinity: it is easy to make it appear Christ is not the Father, but is distinct from him, since he is said to be with the Father from eternity, to be the Son of the Father in truth and love, his own Son, his only begotten and beloved Son; Christ frequently calls the first Person his Father, prayed to him as such, and is our advocate with him, as well as the way unto him; he is said to be sent by the Father, to come from him, and to go to him; and many things are said of Christ that cannot be said of the Father, as his being made flesh, suffering and dying in the room of his people; and the Father is said to do many things unto him, as to anoint him, to seal him, to show him all he did, to commit all judgment to him, and give him to have life in himself as he had: but Christ is a Father with respect to chosen men, who were given him as his children and offspring in covenant; who are adopted into that family

that is named of him, and who are regenerated by his Spirit and grace: and to these he is an “everlasting Father”; he was so from everlasting; for regeneration and faith do not make men children, but make them appear to be so; God’s elect are children previous to the Spirit’s work upon them, and even to the incarnation and death of Christ; adoption is an act of the will of God in covenant from eternity: and Christ is a Father to these unto everlasting; he will never die, and they shall never be left fatherless; he and they will ever continue in this relation; he as such supplies them with everlasting provisions, he clothes them with everlasting raiment, he gives them an everlasting portion, promotes them to everlasting honour, saves them with an everlasting salvation, bearing an everlasting love to them. Some render the words, “the Father of eternity”<sup>f164</sup>; the author of eternal life, who has procured it for his people, and gives it to them; or to whom eternity belongs, who inhabits it, and is possessed of it, is the everlasting I AM, was before all persons and things, was set up in an office capacity from everlasting, and had a glory with the Father before the world was, in whom eternal election, and with whom the everlasting covenant, were made. The Septuagint version is, “the Father of the world to come”<sup>f165</sup>; of the Gospel dispensation; so called, (<sup><3805></sup>Hebrews 2:5) the legal dispensation, when in being, was the then present world, at the end of which Christ came; this is now at an end, and a new state of things has taken place, which with respect to the Old Testament saints was the world to come, and of this Christ is the Father or author; as the law came by Moses, and he was the father of the legal dispensation, grace and truth are come by Christ, the Father and author of the Gospel dispensation; the doctrines of it are from him, and the ordinances of it by him; and he is the father of that state or world to come after the resurrection, the New Jerusalem church state, and also of the ultimate glory.

*The Prince of peace*; Christ is a Prince, often so called, (<sup><3804></sup>Ezekiel 34:24 37:25 <sup><2025></sup>Daniel 9:25) he is so by birth, being the King’s Son, the Son of God, and by office, power, and authority; he is so a Prince as that he is a King; he is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour; and he is a Prince superior to kings, being the Prince of the kings of the earth, (<sup><4451></sup>Acts 5:31 <sup><6005></sup>Revelation 1:5) and he is called the “Prince of peace”, because he is the author of peace; just as he is said to be the “Prince of life”, (<sup><4815></sup>Acts 3:15) for the same reason: he is the author of peace between Jew and Gentile, by abrogating the ceremonial law, the enmity between them, and by sending the Gospel to both, and making it the power of God to salvation to some

of each of them, and by bringing them into the same Gospel church state, and making them partakers of the same privileges and blessings, internal and external, (<sup>4024</sup>Ephesians 2:14-20) and he is the author of peace between God and sinners; he has made it by the blood of the cross, having the chastisement of their peace laid upon him, in consequence of a covenant of peace he made with his Father, who was in him reconciling the world to himself, and he is so called likewise, because he is the giver of peace; of all outward peace and prosperity to his churches, as rest from their enemies, concord among themselves, and additions to them of such as shall be saved; of internal peace through the discoveries of his love, and the application of his righteousness, blood, and sacrifice in a way of believing in him, and in a course of obedience to him; and likewise of eternal peace and rest in the world to come. Moreover, all that concern him as a King or Prince show him to be the Prince of peace: his kingdom lies, among other things, in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; the sceptre of his kingdom is the golden sceptre of grace and mercy; his royal proclamation is the Gospel of peace; the fruit of his Spirit is peace; and his subjects are peaceable ones, both in church and state. With this compare (<sup>3000</sup>Hebrews 7:2 <sup>5016</sup>2 Thessalonians 3:16). It is observable that at his birth there was a general peace, not only in the Roman empire, (<sup>4011</sup>Luke 2:1) but in all the world; and it is remarkable, that whereas at this time the Chinese empire enjoyed a profound peace, the emperor of it changed his name, and would not be called by his name Ngayus, but Pingus, which signifies “peaceable”<sup>f166</sup>.

**Ver. 7.** *Of the increase of [his] government, &c.*] That is, of the Prince of peace, on whose shoulders it is; which, from small beginnings, will rise to a very great pitch and height of glory; this is signified by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands; that smote the image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth, (<sup>2034</sup>Daniel 2:34,35,44,45) and by the parable of the mustard seed, the least of all seeds, and yet, when grown up, becomes a great tree, in which the birds of the air build their nests, (<sup>4033</sup>Matthew 13:31,32). Christ’s kingdom and interest, his dominion and government, may be said to be increased, when his Gospel is spread far and near, which is called the Gospel of the kingdom, and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; by means of which men become subjects of it, and so his kingdom is enlarged. At first it was only preached in Judea; and then it was carried into the Gentile world, where it met with great success, and was spread to the overthrow of Paganism in the Roman empire; a stop was put to its progress by the appearance and power of antichrist, the man

of sin; but at the Reformation it broke out again, and spread itself over many nations; and though of late years there has been a decline, in the latter day the knowledge of it will cover the earth, as the waters do the sea, and multitudes shall be converted by it; which is meant by the increase of Christ's government. In the days of his flesh on earth, few believed in him; after his ascension to heaven, there was a large increase of his followers in Jerusalem, and in the Gentile world; the Gospel being preached there, more were the children of the desolate than of the married wife; large numbers were converted, and churches raised and formed everywhere; and in the latter day the church shall fill the earth, and the kingdoms of this world will become the church of Christ; all nations will flow unto it; the people of the Jews, in a body, will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in; the interest of Christ, which made so contemptible a figure at first, consisting chiefly of the poor of this world, harassed with persecution, and disturbed by heretics, will now make a very great one; the kings of the earth coming into it, the wealth and riches of the world falling into the hands of the saints, the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven being given to them; Christianity will be the universal religion of men, and which will be attended with the greatest spirituality, holiness of life, purity of doctrine, worship, and discipline, and freedom from persecution, as follows. In the word **hbrμl**, rendered, "of the increase", the letter **μ**, in the middle of it, is shut, which in other places is open. The Jews seek for mysteries in this. Aben Ezra says, it respects the miracle of the sun, whose shadow returned back in Hezekiah's time; this is said, to serve an hypothesis; Kimchi observes, on the contrary, that in, Ezra (it is in <sup>(-14213)</sup>Nehemiah 2:13)) the same letter at the end of a word is open, which used to be shut, where mention is made of the walls of Jerusalem being broken down; and thinks it has this mystery in it, that at the time of the salvation, the walls of Jerusalem, that were broken down during the captivity, should be stopped up, and then the government should be opened, which was shut, until the King Messiah came. If there is any mystery in this, it may denote that the government of Christ, which would be for a time straitened, and kept in narrow bounds and limits, should hereafter be extended throughout the world, to the four corners of it, to be firm and stable, perfect and complete; which the figure of this letter, being, shut, and foursquare, may be an emblem of. (see <sup>(-14216)</sup>Revelation 21:16).

*And peace [there shall be] no end;* this respects both the increase and perpetuity of the peace of Christ's kingdom. The peace of believers, under

the Gospel dispensation, is greater than that of the saints under the legal dispensation, whose sacrifices could not remove a consciousness of sin and its guilt; and who, through various laws threatening with death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage; but great is the peace of New Testament saints, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and which may be increased more and more; and in the latter day there will be more peace among themselves; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; the sticks of Joseph and Judah shall be one nor will there ever be any more discord between Jew and Gentile, the lion and the lamb shall lie down together; there will be no more war among the nations, after the battle of Armageddon; and no more persecution, after the slaughter of the witnesses; and this abundance of peace, spiritual and temporal, will be as long as the moon endures, (~~137:7~~ Psalm 72:7) and all this will issue in eternal peace in the world to come:

*upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom;* that is, on it the Prince of peace shall sit, who is David's son, according to the flesh, and so his heir; (see ~~132:13~~ Luke 1:32,33) and which must be understood spiritually of the church and people of Christ, who are his throne and kingdom; in whose hearts he reigns by his grace and Spirit:

*to order it;* dispose, rectify, put into form and order, and adorn and beautify, by enacting laws for them, writing them on their hearts, and putting his Spirit within them, to enable them to keep them; and by setting persons over them, under him, as deputies and sub-governors, guides and rulers, to explain his laws, and enforce them; to teach them to observe all things commanded by him; to whom he gives gifts for usefulness and service; and whose ministry he blesses, for the conversion and gathering in of others, and so repairs and glorifies the house of his kingdom; and also by granting his presence in his word and ordinances:

*and to establish it with justice and judgment;* by convincing men by his Spirit of righteousness and judgment; by revealing in his Gospel his own righteousness to them; by forming in their hearts the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; by teaching them to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and by protecting them from all their enemies: and so he establishes particular believers in the faith of himself, and with the doctrine of faith, that they persevere to the end; and his whole church upon himself, the Rock of ages, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;



and in the latter day he will establish it upon the top of the mountains, (~~211B~~ Isaiah 2:2):

*from henceforth, even for ever*; Christ's throne is for ever and ever, his kingdom is an everlasting one; he will have no successor in it, nor any rival that shall ever dispossess him of it; all other kingdoms will cease, but his will remain for ever: though this clause, according to the accents, is to be connected with what follows<sup>f167</sup>, thus,

*from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*; all that is said in this verse, and in the context, respecting the incarnation of Christ and his kingdom; the veracity, faithfulness, and power of God, are engaged to perform whatever he has purposed and promised; and his zeal, which is no other than his fervent flaming love, will move him to it, and is effectual to accomplish it; his fervent love for his own glory, which is his ultimate end in all his works of nature, providence, and grace, will engage him to fulfil whatever is foretold concerning the birth of Christ, and redemption by him, and his offices and kingdom; since this is greatly concerned in all these things, his zeal or fervent love to his Son, shown in giving all things into his hands, in committing all judgment to him, that men may honour him as they do the Father, will move him to increase his government and peace, and make him his firstborn higher than the kings of the earth; and his zeal or fervent love to his people will put him upon all this, since it is for their good, as well as for his own glory, and the honour of his Son; what the queen of Sheba said of Solomon may be said of Christ and his people, (~~111B~~ 1 Kings 10:9).

**Ver. 8.** *The Lord sent a word unto Jacob*, &c.] The prophet, having comforted Judah with the promise of the Messiah, returns to denounce the judgments of God upon the ten tribes, under the names of Jacob and Israel, which signify the same; for the "word" here is not the word of promise, the comfortable word concerning the Messiah before mentioned; but a word of threatening, ruin, and destruction, to the kingdom of Israel, after enlarged upon, which the Lord sent unto them by his prophets before hand, to warn them of it, and bring them to repentance; by which they would know, when it came to pass, that their destruction was of the Lord, and not a matter of chance: the Septuagint version is, "the Lord sent death upon Jacob"; and so the Arabic version, following it; the same word, differently pointed, being used for the pestilence, but is not the sense here; the Targum, Syriac, and Vulgate Latin versions, render it, "a word", as we do:

*and it hath lighted upon Israel*, or “hath fallen”<sup>f168</sup>; as an arrow shot out of a bow, as some think; or as seed cast upon the earth; or rather like a thunderbolt: it denotes the sure and full accomplishment of the word of God upon the persons to whom it was sent; for as his word of promise, so of threatening, does not return to him void and empty, (<sup>2550</sup>Isaiah 55:10,11). The Targum is,

“the Lord sent a word into the house of Jacob, and it was heard in Israel.”

**Ver. 9.** *And all the people shall know*, &c.] The word of the Lord, and that it is his; and by sad experience shall feel the weight of it; or, “the people shall know the whole of it”<sup>f169</sup>; shall find that the whole of it will be accomplished, every punctilio in it; whatever is said is done, everything predicted by it, the substance of it, and every circumstance relating to it: or they shall be punished, they shall bear, know, and feel the punishment of their sins; in which sense the word “know”, in the Arabic language, is frequently used, of which Schultens<sup>f170</sup> has given many instances:

*[even] Ephraim, and the inhabitants of Samaria*: the ten tribes are meant by Ephraim; and the inhabitants of Samaria are particularly mentioned, because Samaria was the metropolis of Ephraim, (<sup>2709</sup>Isaiah 7:9) and because it was to suffer, and did suffer much in the threatened calamity, being besieged three years, then taken, and its inhabitants carried captive; and so experimentally knew the word of the Lord, and the truth of it, (<sup>1275</sup>2 Kings 17:5,6):

*that say in the pride and stoutness of heart*; being proud and haughty, stout hearted, and far from righteousness, and the fear of God; hardening themselves against him, despising his word, and defying, as it were, his power and providence; saying, as follows:

**Ver. 10.** *The bricks are fallen down*, &c.] Houses made of bricks, which were without the cities besieged and destroyed by the Assyrians; of which the haughty Israelites made no account, looking upon such a desolation as little, or no loss at all:

*but we will build with hewn stone*, so that the houses will be better and stronger, more beautiful, and more durable:

*the sycamores are cut down*; which grew in the fields, and outer parts of the cities, and were but a mean sort of wood, and which the Assyrians cut

down to serve several purposes in their siege; of this sort of trees, (see Gill on “<sup><200></sup>Luke 19:4”):

*but we will change them into cedars*; that is, will plant cedars in place of them; trees tall and large, very delightful to look at, of great worth and usefulness, and very durable; though this may regard not so much the planting of them as the use of them in building, and the sense be agreeable to the former clause; that as, instead of brick, they would build houses with hewn stone; so, instead of sycamore wood, which was not so substantial and durable, and fit for building, they would make use of cedar, which was both beautiful and lasting; so the Septuagint,

“the bricks are fallen, let us hew stones, and cut down sycamores and cedars, and build for ourselves a tower;”

and so the Arabic version; so that, upon the whole, they flattered themselves they should be gainers, and not losers, by the Assyrian invasion; thus deriding it, and despising the prophecy concerning it. Jarchi interprets the bricks and sycamores of the kings that went before, as Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, in whose days they were lessened, and were like a building of brick, broken and falling; but their present king, Pekah, the son of Remaliah, was strong, like a building of hewn stone, and so cedars were better for building than sycamores; and to this sense agrees the Targum,

“the heads (or princes) are carried captive, but we will appoint better in their room; goods are spoiled, but what are more beautiful than them we will purchase.”

**Ver. 11.** *Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, &c.]* Set them up on high, as the word <sup>f171</sup> signifies; exalt them above him, and make them superior to him, and conquerors of him, meaning the Assyrians; who, being sent for by Ahab, went up against Damascus, took it, and carried the people captive, and slew Rezin the king of Syria, the head of which was Damascus, (<sup><200></sup>2 Kings 16:7-9) this is mentioned, because the Israelites put great trust and confidence in this prince, with whom they were in alliance; and this is said to abate their pride, arrogance, and haughtiness, before expressed:

*and join his enemies together*; or mix them; the Assyrian army, consisting of a mixture of various nations; or “stir” them “up”, as the Targum; instigate them against him. Some understand the whole of Israel, against whom the adversaries of Rezin, namely, the Assyrians, would come, as

they did, and invade their land, and carry them captive; with whom were various other people, as follows.

**Ver. 12.** *The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind,* &c.] Rezin, king of Syria, the confederate of the Israelites, being slain, his people joined the Assyrians against Israel; and they, with others mentioned, beset them on all sides, before and behind, east and west; and so the Targum, Septuagint, and other versions, render it, the Syrians on the east, or from the rising of the sun; and the Philistines on the west, or from the setting of the sun; for, as Kimchi observes, Syria lay east of the land of Israel, and Palestine on the West<sup>f172</sup>:

*and they shall devour Israel with open mouth:* greedily and presently; make, as it were, but one morsel of him:

*for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still;* that is, the anger of God, that was not turned away; he had not yet stirred up all his wrath, he had not done with them, he had still other judgments to bring upon them; and his hand continued to be stretched out to inflict them, seeing they were not brought to repentance by what was already done unto them; so the Targum,

“for all this they do not return from their sins, that he may turn away his anger from them, but still retain their sins; and yet his stroke will be to take vengeance on them.”

**Ver. 13.** *For the people turneth not to him that smiteth them,* &c.] Who was the Lord of hosts, as it is explained in the next clause; it was he that had smote the people with the rod of correction and chastisement, by various afflictions and distresses which he had brought upon them; in order to bring them to a sense of their sin and duty, to reclaim and recover them from their backslidings; but they had not such an effect upon them; they returned not to him by repentance and reformation, from whom they had turned themselves by their evil ways; nor to his worship, as the Targum interprets it, to his word and ordinances; for afflictions; unless sanctified, are of no use to restore backsliders. This is to be understood of the people of Israel, the ten tribes, whom the prophet calls “the people”, not my people, nor the people of the Lord, because unworthy of that character. The Septuagint render the words, “the people returned not until they were smitten”, and so the Syriac version intimating, as if they did return when

smitten; but the following words, and the whole context, show the contrary:

*neither do they seek the Lord of hosts*; by prayer and supplication, for pardoning grace and mercy through Christ the Mediator; nor in his word and ordinances, for his presence and communion with him, or instruction or doctrine from him, as the Targum; to be taught true doctrine, and their duty to God and man; this is one part of the character of an unregenerate man, (<sup><6811></sup>Romans 3:11).

**Ver. 14.** *Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, &c.*]

The former of these is afterwards interpreted of “the ancient and honourable”, men in high places, civil magistrates, judges, governors, and elders of the people, the king as supreme, and all subordinate officers; and so the Targum,

“the Lord will destroy from Israel the prince and the ruler;”

and the latter is interpreted of the false prophet. The people of Israel are compared to a beast with a tail, being so sadly degenerated and corrupted; as the Romish antichrist, in both his capacities, civil and ecclesiastical, is compared to a beast; the one being the head, and the other the tail, (<sup><6811></sup>Revelation 13:1,2,11) and Rome Pagan to a dragon with a tail, (<sup><6812></sup>Revelation 12:3,4) and the Saracens and Turks to locusts with tails like the tails of scorpions, (<sup><6810></sup>Revelation 9:10,19):

*branch and rush, in one day.* The Septuagint render it, “great and small”; and so the Arabic version; the first word intending the great men of the nation, in flourishing circumstances, like branches of trees; the latter the common, people, like reeds and rushes, weak and feeble; so Kimchi explains them,

“the strong and the weak;”

though the Targum interprets both of the governor and lord; and so Jarchi says they signify kings and governors; but Aben Ezra renders the word root and branch; and so they may denote the utter destruction of the people of Israel, fathers and children, high and low, rich and poor. (see <sup><3001></sup>Malachi 4:1).

**Ver. 15.** *The ancient and honourable, he [is] the head, &c.*] The elder in office, not in age; and who, on account of his office, dignity, and riches, is

honoured by men, is of a venerable countenance himself, and is revered when seen and looked upon by others, and received by persons with pleasure and cheerfulness; as the phrase used signifies. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “who admire”, or “have” men’s “persons in admiration”; which is the character Jude gives of false teachers, (<sup><6116></sup>Jude 1:16) who are next described:

*and the prophet that teacheth lies, he [is] the tail;* so called from their low extract, being often of a mean original and descent; or rather from the meanness of their spirits, their flattery of princes and great men, to whom they tell lies, and prophesy smooth and false things, for the sake of a little sordid gain, in allusion to dogs that wag their tails at their masters; or from the poison of their doctrines, some creatures having poison in their tails, and do much mischief with them. (see <sup><6199></sup>Revelation 9:19).

**Ver. 16.** *For the leaders of this people cause [them] to err, &c.]* Or, “who bless this people”, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and so the Targum,

“who praise this people;”

that call them blessed, pronounce them happy, (see <sup><3185></sup>Malachi 3:15) and promise them happiness, both in this world and that to come, though guilty of notorious sins, and live a vicious course of life; and so harden them in their iniquities, and cause them to wander more and more from the way of truth and righteousness; and lead them unto, and leave them in, fatal mistakes about their state and condition. These seem to design the ecclesiastical leaders of the people, the blind leaders of the blind, (see <sup><3382></sup>Isaiah 3:12 <sup><4154></sup>Matthew 15:14):

*and [they that are] led of them [are] destroyed;* or, “they” that “are blessed of them are swallowed up”<sup>f173</sup>; and so irrecoverably lost; the deceivers and the deceived perish together; as it is sinful in teachers and leaders of the people to teach them false things, and lead them out of the way, it is criminal in the people to be led and taught by them, who ought to take care what they hear and receive; and therefore both are righteously punished; for the words are a reason why the Lord would cut off both the one and the other.

**Ver. 17.** *Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, &c.]* Take no delight and pleasure in them; but, on the contrary, detest and

abhor them, and so destroy them, being depraved and corrupted by the bad instructions and examples of their parents:

*neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows*; who are objects of pity and compassion; yet these being wicked, as well as the fathers of the one, and the husbands of the other, shall be no more spared than they have been; so that this expresses both the general corruption and destruction of this people:

*for everyone [is] a hypocrite and an evildoer*; a hypocrite, as Aben Ezra on the place observes, is one that is outwardly good, and inwardly wicked; which was the general character of the people of Israel in Isaiah's time, as it was of the Jews in the times of Christ, (see <sup><4225></sup>Matthew 23:25-28) they pretended to do good, but were doers of evil, workers of iniquity, continually committing sin; and yet would be thought to be very upright and sincere, both in their religion towards God, and in their dealings with men; but deceitful in both:

*and every mouth speaketh folly*; or falsehood; a lie, as the Targum, as all lies are foolish; as also all vain words, all impious ones; or the savour of irreligion or superstition, and indeed every idle word, and all unsavoury and corrupt speech, and there is particularly foolish talking, which is not convenient, (<sup><4034></sup>Ephesians 5:4):

*for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still*; which is repeated from (<sup><2392></sup>Isaiah 9:12).

**Ver. 18.** *For wickedness burneth as the fire*, &c.] That is, the punishment of their sins, as the Targum interprets it; the wrath of God for sin, which is poured out like fire, and consumes as that does; unless wicked men are meant, who are consumed with the fire of divine vengeance; the sense is the same:

*it shall devour the briers and thorns*; sinners and ungodly, so the Targum paraphrases it; and Aben Ezra observes, they are the wicked; who are compared to briers and thorns, for their unfruitfulness in themselves, harmfulness to others, and for their weakness to stand against the fury of incensed Deity, (see <sup><4036></sup>2 Samuel 23:6 <sup><2374></sup>Isaiah 27:4):

*and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest*. Kimchi thinks there is a gradation in these words, that as fire first begins to burn the thorns, and smaller wood, and then the greater; so wickedness consumes first the little

ones, who are the thorns, and after that it kindles in the thickets of the forest, who are the great ones; so the commonwealth of Israel is compared to a forest; and the thorns, briars, and thickets, may denote the common people and their governors, who all being guilty of wickedness, should not escape the vengeance of God:

*and they shall mount up [like] the lifting up of smoke:* or lift up themselves, or be lifted up; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret the word; but Jarchi thinks it has the signification of *Æwb*, “to be perplexed”: and gives the sense of it thus; they are perplexed, and shut up with the strength of smoke that burns: others take it to be a word of the same meaning with *qba*; and render it, “they shall pulverize”, or “go into dust in the lifting up of smoke”<sup>f174</sup>; and denotes the dissolution of the commonwealth; but perhaps it may be better rendered, “though they shall walk proudly” (or behave haughtily), their “pride” shall be as “smoke”, which soon vanishes away; since the word, which is only here used, in the Syriac language signifies to walk proudly, as a cock with two crests<sup>f175</sup>.

**Ver. 19.** *Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, &c.]* Brought into great distress and affliction; sore judgments and calamities being upon it; for not darkness in a natural, but in a figurative sense, is intended, (see <sup><2182></sup>Isaiah 8:22 9:1) the allusion is to the ascending of the smoke before mentioned, through fire being kindled in the thickets of the forest, which filled the air with darkness; as smoke arising in great quantity does. This sense of the word, which is only to be met with in this place, is given by Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, from the use of it in the Arabic language, in which it signifies<sup>f176</sup> darkness; but the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “the whole land is burned”; and which is confirmed by the Targum, which so interprets it; and this sense well agrees with the context:

*and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire;* this explains who are meant by the briars and thorns, and thickets of the forest, the inhabitants of the land of Israel; who, as they are the fuel of fire, were the objects of divine wrath and fury:

*no man shall spare his brother;* which may be ascribed either to the darkness and confusion in which they should be, and so not be able to discern a friend from a foe, as persons surrounded with smoke; or to their



malignant spirit, cruelty and inhumanity, not only doing ill to their enemies, but to their own friends and relations, to their own flesh and blood.

**Ver. 20.** *And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry, &c.]*

Either with his hand, and rob and plunder all within his reach; or, with his teeth, as cannibals, or beasts of prey, catch at, tear, and rend in pieces, whatever comes in their way; and yet hungry after more, and unsatisfied, as follows:

*and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied;* ravage and spoil on every side, and yet not content. The Targum is,

“he shall spoil on the south, and be hungry; and he shall destroy on the north, and not be satisfied:”

*they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm;* destroy their near relations, who are their own flesh and blood, or take away their substance from them; so the Targum,

“they shall spoil every man the substance of his neighbour:”

which will give some light to (<sup>66716</sup>Revelation 17:16).

**Ver. 21.** *Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh, &c.]* That is, “Manasseh” shall eat or devour “Ephraim”; and “Ephraim” shall eat or devour “Manasseh”; as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it; which is to be understood of their quarrels, contentions, and wars among themselves, whereby they bit, devoured, and consumed each other, though they were brethren; which explains and confirms what is before said, of no man sparing his brother, and everyone eating the flesh of his own arm. The Targum paraphrases the words thus,

“they of the house of “Manasseh”, with those of the house of “Ephraim”, and they of the house of “Ephraim”, with those of the house of “Manasseh”, shall be joined together as one, to come against them of the house of Judah;”

and so Jarchi interprets them,

““Manasseh” shall be joined with “Ephraim”, and “Ephraim” shall be joined with “Manasseh”, and they together shall be joined against Judah;”

so it follows,

*[and] they together [shall be] against Judah*; as the ten tribes did sometimes make war against the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, (see ~~486~~2 Chronicles 28:6-8):

*for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still*; more and sorer judgments were to come upon this people for their sins. (See Gill on “~~292~~Isaiah 9:12”).