

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 22

This chapter contains two prophecies, one concerning the invasion of Judah and Jerusalem, not by the Medes and Persians, but by the Assyrian army, under which they served; and the other of the removal of Shebna, an officer in Hezekiah's court, and of the placing of Eliakim in his stead. After the title of the former of these prophecies, the distress of the people, through the invasion, is described, by their getting up to the housetops, (^{22:1}Isaiah 22:1) by the stillness of the city, having left both trade and mirth; by the slain in it, not by the sword, but through fear or famine, (^{22:2}Isaiah 22:2) by the flight of the rulers, and by the lamentation of the prophet, (^{22:3-5}Isaiah 22:3-5) the instruments of which distress were the Persians and Medes serving under Sennacherib, who are described by their quivers and shields, their chariots and horsemen, (^{22:6,7}Isaiah 22:6,7) the methods the Jews took to defend themselves, and their vain confidence, are exposed; for which, with their disrespect to the Lord, and his admonitions, their carnal security and luxury, they are threatened with death, (^{22:8-14}Isaiah 22:8-14) then follows the prophecy of the deposition of Shebna, who is described by his name and office, (^{22:15}Isaiah 22:15) whose pride is exposed as the cause of his fall, (^{22:16}Isaiah 22:16) and he is threatened not only to be driven from his station, but to be carried captive into another country, suddenly and violently, and with great shame and disgrace, (^{22:17-19}Isaiah 22:17-19) and another put in his place, who is mentioned by name, (^{22:20}Isaiah 22:20) and who should be invested with his office and power, and have all the ensigns of it, (^{22:21,22}Isaiah 22:21,22) and should continue long in it, to great honour and usefulness to his family, (^{22:23,24}Isaiah 22:23,24) yet not always, (^{22:25}Isaiah 22:25).

Ver. 1. *The burden of the valley of vision*, &c.] A prophecy concerning Jerusalem, so called, because it lay in a valley, encompassed about with mountains, and which was the habitation of the prophets or seers, and the seat of vision and prophecy; and perhaps there is an allusion to its name, which signifies the vision of peace, or they shall see peace. The Septuagint version calls it, "the word of the valley of Sion"; and the Arabic version,

“a prophecy concerning the inhabitants of the valley of Sion, to wit, the fields which are about Jerusalem.”

The Targum is,

“the burden of the prophecy concerning the city which dwells in the valley, of which the prophets prophesied;”

by all which it appears, that not the whole land of Judea is thought to be meant, only the city of Jerusalem, so called, not from its low estate into which it would fall, through the wickedness of the people, and so rather to be called a valley than a mountain, as Kimchi; but from its situation, it being, as Josephus^{f422} says, fortified with three walls, except on that side at which it was encircled with inaccessible valleys; and hence it may be, that one of its gates is called the valley gate, (^{<46213>}Nehemiah 2:13 3:13) and besides, there was a valley in it, between the mountains of Zion and Acra, which divided the upper and lower city, as he also elsewhere says^{f423}. The burden of it is a heavy prophecy of calamities that should come upon it, or at least of a fright it should be put into, not in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, when it was taken and destroyed, as Jarchi and Kimchi, and another Jew Jerom makes mention of; nor in the times of Titus Vespasian, according to Eusebius, as the said Jerom relates; but in the times of Hezekiah, when Judea was invaded, and Jerusalem besieged by Sennacherib:

what aileth thee now? or, “what to thee now?”^{f424} what is come to thee? what is the matter with thee now? how comes this strange and sudden change?

that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops? not to burn incense to the queen of heaven, which was sometimes done, and is the sense of some mentioned by Aben Ezra; but either for safety, to secure themselves from their enemies; or to take a view of them, and observe their motions, and cast from thence their arrows and darts at them; or to look out for help, or to mourn over their distresses, and implore help of the Lord; (see ^{<2315>}Isaiah 15:2,3) and this was the case, not only of some, but of them all; so that there was scarce a man to be seen in the streets, or in the lower parts of their houses, but were all gone up to the tops of them, which were built with flat roofs and battlements about them, (^{<6218>}Deuteronomy 22:8).

Ver. 2. *Thou art full of stirs*, &c.] Or, “wast full of stirs”; through the multitude of people walking about in it, and the vast hurry of business done

in it; but now all hush and quiet, the streets clear of people, and the shops shut up, and all got up to the housetops for shelter; or, “full of noises”^{f425}, as a populous trading city is. The word signifies shoutings and acclamations, and is used for joyful ones, (~~300P~~Zechariah 4:7) and may be so taken here, and may design such as were expressed at their festivals, and on other occasions; unless it is to be understood of doleful ones, on account of the invasion and siege:

a tumultuous city; through the throng of people, and the noise of thorn:

a joyous city; some on business, others on pleasure; some hurrying from place to place about their trade and commerce, and others amusing themselves with pastime, mirth, and jollity; which is commonly the case of populous cities in prosperity. This had been Jerusalem’s case, but now it was otherwise:

thy slain [men] are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle; for Sennacherib never entered into it, nor put any of its inhabitants to the sword; nor was there any battle fought between them, nor was he suffered so much as to shoot an arrow into it, (~~237B~~Isaiah 37:33) wherefore those that died in it died either through the fright and consternation they were put into, or through the famine his army had caused, in laying the country round about them desolate.

Ver. 3. *All thy rulers are fled together*, &c.] Either the rulers of Jerusalem, civil and ecclesiastical, that should have been at the head of the people, and have encouraged them, fled together to the housetops, or to the temple and strongholds; or the generals and officers of their militia, one and all of them fled, as if they had done it by joint consultation and consent; or the rulers of the several cities of Judea, which, when invaded by Sennacherib, stayed not to defend them, but left them and fled:

they are bound by the archers; or, “from the bow”^{f426}; from using it; were in such a consternation, and under such a panic, that they had no strength nor heart to draw the bow, but were as if they were bound, and held from it: or for fear of the bow, or the archers in the Assyrian army, and therefore fled from them, as the Tigurine version renders it, joining it to the preceding clause, “they fled from the bow, they are bound”; or, as Ben Melech, for fear of the bow, they delivered themselves up, and were bound; so Aben Ezra:

all that are found in thee are bound together; that is, from the bow, as before; not only the princes, but the common people. These clauses have led many interpreters to conclude that this must be understood of the taking of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, when Zedekiah was bound in chains, and carried to Babylon, (^{2521b}Jeremiah 52:11):

[which] have fled from far; from the furthest part of the land of Judea to Jerusalem, for shelter and safety.

Ver. 4. *Therefore said I, &c.*] Not God to the ministering angels, as Jarchi; but the prophet to those that were about him, his relations, friends, and acquaintance:

look away from me; turn away from me, look another way; cease from me, let me alone; leave me to myself, that I may weep in secret, take my fill of sorrow, and give full vent to it:

I will weep bitterly; or, “I will be bitter”, or, “bitter myself in weeping”^{f427}; it denotes the vehemence of his grief, the greatness of his sorrow, and the strength of his passion:

labour not to comfort me; make use of no arguments to persuade me to lay aside my mourning; do not be urgent and importunate with me to receive consolation, for my soul refuses to be comforted:

because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people; his countrymen, which were as dear to him as a daughter to a tender parent, now spoiled, plundered, and made desolate by the ravages of the enemy, in many cities of Judea.

Ver. 5. *For [it is] a day of trouble, &c.*] To Hezekiah, and also Jerusalem, and all the inhabitants of the land:

and of treading down; the people of it by Sennacherib’s army, like mire in the streets, when their cities were taken by him:

and of perplexity by the Lord of hosts in the valley of vision; in Jerusalem, besieged, and threatened with desolation; which threw the king and his nobles, and all the inhabitants, into the utmost perplexity, confusion, and distress; and all this was not merely from men, nor was it by chance, but by the permission and appointment of God, to humble his people for their sins, and bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of them:

breaking down the walls: of the fenced cities, with their battering rams, at the time they besieged and took them, (^{<121813>}2 Kings 18:13):

and of crying to the mountains: looking and running to them for help and succour, for shelter and protection; and crying so loud, by reason of their distress, as that it reached the distant mountains, and made them echo with it.

Ver. 6. *And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men [and] horsemen,* &c.] Or the Elamites, as the Targum and Septuagint, that is, the Persians, who were at this time subject to the Assyrians, and served in Sennacherib's army, which consisted of many nations; (see ^{<23107>}Isaiah 29:7) these bore the quiver, a case for arrows, being expert in the use of the bow, which was the chief of their might, (^{<3485>}Jeremiah 49:35) and so Strabo^{f428} reports, that the Elamites had many archers among them; and along with them went

chariots of men, full of men, of military men; these were chariots for war, and brought men to fight against Jerusalem;

[and] horsemen also, these were the cavalry, as those that carried bows and arrows seem to be the foot soldiers. The Targum is,

“and the Elamites bore arms in the chariot of a man, and with it a couple of horsemen;”

as in the vision or prophecy concerning Babylon, (^{<22017>}Isaiah 21:7,9):

and Kir uncovered the shield; this was a city in Media, and signifies the Medes, who were in subjection to the Assyrians, and fought under them; (see ^{<12149>}2 Kings 16:9) though Ben Melech says it was a city belonging to the king of Assyria; these prepared for battle, uncased their shields, which before were covered to keep them clean, and preserve them from rust and dirt; or they polished them, made them bright, as the word in the Ethiopic language signifies, as Deuteronomy Dieu has observed; (see ^{<22015>}Isaiah 21:5) these might be most expert in the use of the shield and sword, as the others were at the bow and arrow. Some render “Kir” a “wall”: so the Targum,

“and to the wall the shields stuck;”

and the Vulgate Latin version, “the shield made bare the wall”: but it is best to understand it as the proper name of a place.

Ver. 7. *And it shall come to pass, [that] thy choicest valleys, &c.*] The valleys that were near Jerusalem, that used to be covered with the choicest corn or vines, or with grass and flocks of sheep, and used to be exceeding delightful and pleasant:

shall be full of chariots; where they can be more easily driven than on mountains; these were chariots not for pleasure, but for war; chariots full of soldiers, to fight against and besiege Jerusalem:

and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate: to take them that come out of the city, and to force their way into it; as well as to protect and defend the foot, while they made the assault, and scaled the walls, and to be ready when the gates were opened to them.

Ver. 8. *And he discovered the covering of Judah, &c.*] Either God himself, who uncloaked them of their hypocrisy, as Dr. Lightfoot; or took away his power and presence from them, and his protection of them, and discovered their weakness; or rather the enemy Sennacherib: and then by the covering is meant, not Jerusalem, nor the temple, as Jarchi and Kimchi, for neither of them came into his hands; but the fenced cities of Judah, which were the strength and protection of the country; these he took and dismantled, (^{<1218B>}2 Kings 18:13) and when this was done, it was high time for the Jews at Jerusalem to look about them, and provide for their defence and safety:

and thou, didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest; to see what store of armour they had, in what condition it was, and to take from hence, and furnish themselves and soldiers with it, to annoy the enemy, and defend themselves. This house of the forest is the same with the house of the forest of Lebanon; so called, not because built in it, for it was in Jerusalem, but because it was built of the wood of Lebanon; or because it was surrounded with trees, and had walks and groves belonging to it, resembling that forest. This was an armoury; here Solomon put his two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold, (^{<1107E>}1 Kings 7:2 10:16,17) see also (^{<2104E>}Song of Solomon 4:4).

Ver. 9. *Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many, &c.*] Not Jerusalem in general, but that part of it which was called the stronghold of Zion, and in particular had the name of the city of David, (^{<1077E>}2 Samuel 5:7) the fortifications of which, in times of peace, had gone to decay; and which they had seen before, but took no notice of, being in safety; but now besieged, and in great danger, they looked upon them in

good earnest, in order to repair them, and secure themselves from the irruption of the enemy; for this is not to be understood of breaches now made by the Assyrian army, but of old ones, which had lain neglected; (see ^{<431B>}2 Chronicles 32:5):

and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool: not to make mortar with, to be used in repairing the breaches, as Kimchi; but either that they might be as a wall round about the place, as Aben Ezra; or rather to deprive the enemy of them, and cut off all communications from him, and to supply the inhabitants of the city with them; (see ^{<431B>}2 Chronicles 32:3,4). The Septuagint version is, “and he turned the water of the old pool into the city”: but the old pool was another pool hereafter mentioned, and was without the city, the same with the upper pool; whereas this was the lower, and was in the city. The Targum is,

“and ye gathered the people to the waters of the lower pool.”

Ver. 10. *And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, &c.*] To know what number of men were in them, and how many could be spared to do duty, either as watchmen or soldiers; or to know how to levy the tax, and what money they would be able to raise, to defray the charge of the defence of the city; or to see what provisions they had, and so make a computation how long they could hold out the siege; or else to observe what houses might be annoyed by the enemy, and what stood in the way of the repair of the walls, or were proper to pull down, that with the stones and timber of them they might make up the breaches of the wall, and that the stronger, as follows:

and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall; either such as were without the wall, which, had they let them stand, would either have been destroyed by the enemy, or have been a harbour for them; or those upon it, and near it within, which stood in the way of the repair, and were easily beat down by the enemy; or might be a means of communication between them and such as were inclined to be treacherous; with the stones and timber of which houses, when broken down, they strengthened the wall, and so served a better purpose than if they had stood.

Ver. 11. *Ye made also a ditch between the two walls, &c.*] The outward and the inward; for Hezekiah not only repaired the broken wall, but he built another without, (^{<431B>}2 Chronicles 32:5) and between these two he made a ditch, or receptacle for water; for rain water, as Kimchi says; that the

inhabitants might not want water during the siege; but the end for which it was made follows:

for the water of the old pool; which, being without the city, was by this means drained into this ditch or receptacle; and so the Assyrians were deprived of it, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem more abundantly supplied; this was wisely contrived to distress the enemy, and to enable themselves to hold out the siege the longer; and for this and other methods they took they are not blamed, but for what follows:

but ye have not looked unto the Maker thereof; either of the distress and calamity which came upon them for their sins, with the will and by the decree of God; or of the water of the pool, which is a creature of his; for who can give rain or water but himself? or rather of the city of Jerusalem, to build which he stirred up persons, and assisted them in it, and which he chose for the seat of his habitation and worship:

neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago; not in his own mind from eternity, which is the gloss of the Jewish Rabbins^{f429}; Jerusalem being one of the seven things, which, before the world was, came into the mind of God to create; but in time, many years ago, in the times of David, who built some part of it; and before, it being the ancient city of Salem. Now this was their fault, that they trusted in their warlike preparations, and prudential care and caution, for the defence of themselves, and looked not unto, nor trusted in, the Lord their God; for though Hezekiah did, yet many of his people did not; and very probably his principal courtiers and officers about him, concerned in the above methods, and particularly Shebna, hereafter mentioned.

Ver. 12. *And in that day did the Lord God of hosts, &c.*] When it was a day of trouble, of treading down, and of perplexity; when Jerusalem was besieged by the Assyrian army; and when the people were so much concerned, and so careful for their defence and preservation; then did the Lord

call to weeping and to mourning; to confess and mourn over their sins, the cause of these calamities; to lament their unhappy case; to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and, by prayer and supplication, with tears to implore his help and assistance, and grant them deliverance; this the Lord called them unto by the voice of his Providence, by the

afflictive dispensations of it, and also by his prophets, whom he sent unto them, particularly the Prophet Isaiah; so the Targum,

“and the prophet of the Lord God of hosts called in that day,” &c.:

and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; which were external signs and tokens of inward sorrow and repentance; the former of which was done by shaving the head, or plucking off the hair, and was forbidden on private occasions, yet might be allowed in a public case; (see ^{<3300>}Micah 1:16 ^{<3146>}Jeremiah 16:6).

Ver. 13. *And behold joy and gladness*, &c.] As if it was a time of rejoicing, rather than of weeping and mourning; and as if they were at a festival, and in the greatest prosperity and liberty, and not besieged by a powerful army:

slaying oxen, and killing sheep: not for sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, as typical of the great sacrifice; but to eat, and that not as at ordinary meals, or merely for the support of life, but as at feasts, where, as there was great plenty, so luxury and intemperance were indulged; just as Belshazzar did, at the same time that Babylon was beset by the army of the Medes and Persians, (^{<2710>}Daniel 5:1,30) so the Jews here, having taken the armour out of the treasury, and furnished the soldiers with them, and took care of provisions of bread and water, and having repaired and fortified the walls of the city, thought themselves secure, and gave up themselves to feasting, mirth, and pleasure: saying,

let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die; which they said, not as believing their case to be desperate; that the next day, or in a few days, their city would be taken by the Assyrians, and they should be put to the sword, and therefore, since they had but a short life to live, they would live a merry one; but rather as not believing it, but scoffing at the prophet, and at the word of the Lord by him; as if they should say, the prophet says we shall die tomorrow, or we are in great danger of being suddenly destroyed; but let us not be dismayed at such words, and to show that we do not believe them, or if this is our case, let us take our fill of pleasure, while we may have it. This is the language of epicures, and of such that disbelieve the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, to whom the apostle applies the words in (^{<4152>}1 Corinthians 15:32).

Ver. 14. *And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of hosts*, &c.] Both what they said in the preceding verse (^{<2723>}Isaiah 22:13), their profane,

impious, and scoffing language; which perhaps was not expressed by words, but said in their hearts, and which God the searcher of hearts knew, and revealed it to the prophet; and also what he determined to do upon this, which is afterwards said, which being a purpose within himself, could not be known without a divine revelation; so the Targum,

“the prophet said, with mine ears I was hearing, when this was decreed from before the Lord of hosts;”

namely, that their iniquity should not be forgiven; the Vulgate Latin version is, “the voice of the Lord of hosts is revealed in mine ears”; saying what is expressed in the next clause: but the Septuagint, and Arabic versions, understand it of the ears of Lord of hosts himself: and Aben Ezra thinks the word “ani” or “I” is wanting, and so Kimchi; and that the words should be rendered thus, “it was revealed in mine ears, [I am] the Lord of hosts”: and so it is by some others, “it was revealed in the ears of me, the Lord of hosts”^{f430}, or, “of the Lord of hosts”; the wickedness, profaneness, and luxury of the people; the cry of their sins came up into the ears of the Lord of hosts, and therefore he determined to do what he next declares:

Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die; it being of heinous nature, so daring, insolent, and affronting, such a contempt of God and his word, and discovering such impenitence and hardness of heart, it should not be expiated by any sacrifice whatever; not by the day of atonement, nor death itself, as the Jews from hence fancy; in short, it should not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that to come; for if not till they died, then not after, where there is no repentance, nor remission; (see ^{f432}Matthew 12:32) the words are in the form of an oath, “if this iniquity be purged, or expiated”, &c.^{f431}; the Lord swears to it, that it never should be pardoned, but they should die in it; as a corporeal, so an eternal death. The Targum interprets it of the second death; that is, as Kimchi explains it, the death of the soul in the world to come; (see ^{f433}Revelation 21:8):

saith the Lord God of hosts; and therefore this would certainly be the case; for his word and oath are his two immutable things, in which it is impossible for him to lie.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God of hosts*, Go, &c.] These words are spoken to the prophet, bidding him go to Shebna’s house; so the Arabic version, “go to the house”; or however, by some means or other, let him

know that he should be displaced, and turned out of his office, and another put in his room:

get thee unto this treasurer; or governor, as the Targum; treasurer in the house of King Hezekiah, as Kimchi: the word has the signification of profit; and Jarchi, from the Talmud^{f432}, calls him master of the profits; that is, of the profits and revenues belonging to the king; though, perhaps, he sought more his own profit and advantage than the king's: it has also the signification of danger, and so may be rendered, "this dangerous" man to the king and state. The Jews say^{f433} he entered into conspiracy with some others in Jerusalem, to deliver up the city and king into the hands of Sennacherib. It is also used for a cherisher or nourisher, (~~1000~~1 Kings 1:2) and may be understood of him, as a cherisher and encourager of the scoffers before mentioned, and a fomenter of secret conspiracies against the king and the city. Some render it, "this Sochenite", so called from the place of his birth, or from whence he came; and the Jews^{f434} say he came from Sochen, a place in Egypt; and he seems by what follows to have been a foreigner, and not an inhabitant of Jerusalem; nor is it likely that he should be twice described by his office:

[even] unto Shebna, which [is] over the house; that is, over the king's house, so Kimchi; the steward, that had the ordering of all the affairs civil and domestic in it, which was a very high post; he had the keys of the money, stores, and provisions in it; (see ~~2000~~Isaiah 22:22). The Vulgate Latin version calls him the governor of the temple; so Jarchi understands it, that he was over the house of the sanctuary, the temple; some Jewish writers say he was a high priest; and others that he was an "amarcal"^{f435}, which was a name of office in the temple, a governor there, that had the keys of the stores in it:

[and say]; this is not in the text, but is supplied; the message to him follows.

Ver. 16. *What hast thou here?* &c.] In the king's house, or in Jerusalem; what business hast thou here? thou art unworthy of such an office, nor shalt thou long continue in it; what inheritance hast thou here? thou art an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and hast no estate or possession in the land:

and whom hast thou here? of thy family and kindred; what ancestors hast thou? where did they live or die, and were buried? what children hast thou

to succeed thee in honour and estate? or what relations to be interred, when deceased, in thy grave, that thou hast made such a provision as follows? and it may be observed, that wherever he is spoken of, the name of his father is never mentioned. Aben Ezra's gloss is, who hast thou here of thy family that can help thee? his fall and ruin being at hand:

that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here; in the city of Jerusalem, or near it; the Jews say^{f436}, among the sepulchres of the kings of the house of David; as if he thought to live and die here, and so had provided a sepulchre for himself and family, to lie in great pomp and splendour, like the kings and princes of the earth:

[as] he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, [and] that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock; where sepulchres, as well as palaces, used to be built; (see ⁴²⁷⁰Matthew 27:60) and great men, especially the Egyptians, used to build sepulchres like to palaces; though it may be observed, that the word "as" is not in the text; and the words may be understood of Shebna's hewing out a sepulchre in some high place near Jerusalem, and building a fine house upon a rock there; and which may design either one and the same thing, a grave or sepulchre being called a house, (³⁸⁰²Job 30:23,24) or two different things, a sepulchre to be buried in when dead, and a palace to dwell in while living; and so the words may be rendered thus^{f437}, "O he that heweth himself", &c.; "O he that graveth an habitation", &c.; so the Syriac version, "O thou that hewest thy sepulchre on high", &c.

Ver. 17. *Behold, the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity,* &c.] Or with the captivity of a man; so the Targum, of a mighty man, Sennacherib king of Assyria; who, as the Jews say^{f438}, when he went from Jerusalem, upon the rumour of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia coming against him, carried away Shebna and his company, as with an inundation: or as a man is carried captive, whose captivity is harder, and more severe and cruel, than a woman's, as the Rabbins^{f439} observe; a woman finding more mercy in captivity usually than a man does. Some of the Jewish writers render the word "geber" a cock, as they do elsewhere; and gloss it, as a cock is carried away, and goes from place to place^{f440}; and so the Vulgate Latin version,

"behold, the Lord shall cause thee to be carried away, as a cock is carried away;"

but it seems best, with Aben Ezra and Kimchi, to read the word “man” in the vocative case; the Lord will carry thee away, “O man”, O mighty man^{f441}; as mighty a man as thou art in office, in power, in riches, God shall carry thee away with the greatest ease imaginable:

and will surely cover thee: or, “in covering cover thee”; with confusion, as the Targum. Jarchi says the word has the signification of flying; and so interprets it, he shall cause thee to fly like a bird into captivity; that is, very speedily and swiftly. The Rabbins gather from hence that Shebna was struck with leprosy, because the leper was obliged to put a covering upon his upper lip; and this sense is embraced by Grotius; but the allusion seems to be to persons in disgrace, or condemned to die, whose faces used to be covered, (~~1708~~ Esther 7:8 ~~1802~~ Job 9:24).

Ver. 18. *He will surely violently turn and toss thee*, &c.] Or, “wrapping he will wrap thee with a wrapping”; as anything is wrapped up close and round, either to be more commodiously carried, or more easily tossed: or, “rolling he will roll thee with a rolling”^{f442}; that is, roll thee over and over again, till brought to a place appointed:

[like] a ball into a large country; where there is nothing to stop it; and being cast with a strong hand, runs a great way, and with prodigious swiftness; and signifies, that Shebna’s captivity was inevitable, which he could not escape; that he was no more in the hands of the Lord than a ball in the hands of a strong man; and could as easily, and would be, hurled out of his place, into a distant country, as a ball, well wrapped, could be thrown at a great distance by a strong arm; and that this his captivity would be swift and sudden; and that he should be carried into a large country, and at a distance. Jarchi says Casiphia^{f443}, a place mentioned in (~~1807~~ Ezra 8:17). Aben Ezra interprets it of Babylon, which seems likely.

There shalt thou die: in that large and distant country; and not at Jerusalem, where he had built a magnificent sepulchre for himself and family:

and there the chariots of thy glory; shall cease and be no more; he should not have them along with him to ride in pomp and state, and to show his glory and grandeur, as he had done in Jerusalem. We connect this with the following clause, and supply it thus,

[shall be] the shame of thy lord’s house; as if the chariots and coaches of state he had rode in were to the reproach of the king his master; who had

made such an ill choice of a steward of his house, or prime minister of state, and had advanced such a worthless creature to such a dignity; but it may be better supplied thus, without being so strictly connected with the other clause, and which is more agreeable to the accents, “[O thou], the shame of thy lord’s house”^{f444}; a disgrace and dishonour to Ahaz, who perhaps put him in his office; and to Hezekiah, that continued him in it. The Jews say he was brought to a very shameful end; they say^{f445}, that when he went out of the city of Jerusalem, in order to deliver Hezekiah’s forces into the hands of the enemy, Gabriel shut the gate before his army; to whom the enemy said, where’s thy army? he replied, they are turned back; say they, thou hast mocked us: upon which they bored his heels, and fastened him to the tails of horses, and drew him upon thorns and briers. So says Kimchi, instead of chariots of glory, he thought they would give him, they put him to shame, binding him to the tails of horses.

Ver. 19. *And I will drive thee from thy station, &c.*] Or thou shalt be driven from it, according to my word; this is said by the prophet, and expresses his being degraded from his office by the king, according to the will of God:

and from thy state shall he pull thee down; either the king his master, or the Lord, who, by his providence, would so order it, that it should be: the phrases express indignation and force, and an entire removal of him from all offices in the king’s house or government; for it does not at all seem likely, what is commonly suggested, that he was removed from his office of treasurer, or steward of the king’s house, and put into a lower office, and made a scribe, as he is called, (²³⁷⁰Isaiah 37:2) besides, the words preceding show that he should be carried captive into another land.

Ver. 20. *And it shall come to pass in that day, &c.*] At the same time that Shebna was deposed from his high station:

that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah; whom Kimchi thinks was the same with Azariah the son of Hilkiyah, who might have two names, and was a ruler over the house of God in the times of Hezekiah, (¹³⁰³1 Chronicles 6:13 ⁴⁸¹³2 Chronicles 31:13) this man, by the character given him, was a good man, a faithful, diligent, and constant servant of the Lord, and therefore he delighted to raise him to great honour and dignity: he did not seek great things for himself, nor did he thrust himself into the office, but the Lord called him to it in his providence, and put him into it; he did, as Kimchi observes, put it into the heart of Hezekiah to appoint him

governor in the room of Shebna. This man was a type of Christ; his name agrees with him which signifies, “my God will raise up”; that is, the dead by him, (^{<4161>}1 Corinthians 6:14) and so does the character of a servant, frequently given to Christ in this book; (see ^{<2301>}Isaiah 42:1 49:3 53:11) nor did Christ take any office to himself, but was called unto it by his Father, (^{<3004>}Hebrews 5:4,5).

Ver. 21. *And I will clothe him with thy robe, &c.*] The same he wore, or rather one like unto it, which was a badge and token of his office. If he was a priest, as the Jews say, this was his priestly robe, by which the high priest was distinguished from others; but he rather seems to be a civil officer, who wore a garment suitable to it, and distinctive of it; in which he was a type of Christ, invested with the priestly, or rather with the kingly office, crowned with glory and honour; and who is seen among his churches, clothed with a garment down to the feet, (^{<4113>}Revelation 1:13):

and strengthen him with thy girdle: which was a symbol both of power and of strength; both priests and princes had their girdles. Christ’s girdle, in the administration of his office, is faithfulness and righteousness, (^{<2315>}Isaiah 11:5);

and I will commit thy government into his hand; the government of the king’s house, typical of the government of the church, put into the hands of Christ by his Father, (^{<2306>}Isaiah 9:6,7 ^{<4152>}John 5:22,23):

and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah; have a fatherly care over them, and affection for them; and such an one is Christ, who stands in the relation of the everlasting Father to his church and people, and of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named; he provides for them, takes care of them, is tenderly affected towards them, pities and sympathizes with them, and affords them all supply and support. Kimchi interprets it of a faithful counsellor, and a good leader. So Ben Melech.

Ver. 22. *And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, &c.*] In allusion either to magistrates carrying a key on their shoulder, hanging down from thence, having a hook at one end of it fit for that purpose; or having one embroidered on that part of their garment: or one carried before them by their servants. It regards either the keys of the temple; or rather the key of the king’s house, which it was proper should

be delivered to him as treasurer and steward of it; the Targum takes in both,

“and I will give the key of the house of the sanctuary, and the government of the house of David, into his hand.”

In the mystical sense, Christ is said to have this key, (~~Gen~~ Revelation 3:7) where the following words are applied to him:

so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open; all which is expressive of the government of the church being on his shoulders, and of his absolute and uncontrollable power over it; who opens the treasures of his word, of his grace, and of wisdom and knowledge, and communicates them unto, and shuts or hides them from, whom he pleases; who opens and shuts the doors of his church, his house, and lets in, and keeps out, whom he thinks fit; and who also opens and shuts the door of the kingdom of heaven, and introduces into it his own people, and excludes others.

Ver. 23. *And I will fasten him [as] a nail in a sure place, &c.*] In a strong part of the wall or timber, where it shall not fail, or be removed, or cut down, and so let drop what is hung upon it: it denotes the stability and continuance of his government, and of the strength and support he should be of unto others; and well agrees with Christ his antitype; (see ~~3804~~ Zechariah 10:4) and is expressive of the strength of Christ, as the mighty God; and as the man of God’s right hand, made strong for himself; and as the able Saviour, and mighty Redeemer; and of the stability of his person, he is unchangeable, the same today, yesterday, and for ever; and of his office, as Mediator, Head, and Surety of the covenant; whose priesthood passes not from one to another, and whose kingdom is an everlasting one, and his truths and ordinances unshaken and immovable: the sure place in which he is fixed is both his church, where he is the everlasting Head, Husband, and Saviour of it; and heaven, where he is, and will be retained, until the time of the restitution of all things:

and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house; or make the throne of his father’s house glorious, Eliakim being, as some have thought, of the blood royal; or he should be an honour and credit to his father’s house, by his wise and faithful administration of the government committed to him. Christ is the brightness of his Father’s glory; and, to them that believe, he is an honour; he is on a glorious throne himself, and he will

bring all his Father's family to sit with him on the same throne, (^{<0118>}1 Samuel 2:8 ^{<0121>}Revelation 3:21).

Ver. 24. *And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house,* &c.] Which shows the reason of his being compared to a nail; not to one that fastens pieces of timber together, or to a nail or stake drove in the ground, to which the cords of tents are fastened, but to a nail in a wall, on which things are hung: and the meaning is, that all of his father's family would be dependent upon him, be supported by him, and receive honour and glory from him: and which also is true of Christ the antitype; the glory of building his Father's house, the church, and of saving it, and of making of it glorious, belongs to him, and is given to him; it is put upon him, and it is visible on him, and it is weighty, and will continue:

the offspring and the issue; all the descendants of his father's family, sons and daughters, children and grandchildren; so the Targum,

“and all the glorious or noble ones of his father's house shall lean upon him, children, and children's children:”

so all the children of God, and who are also Christ's spiritual seed and offspring, these depend upon him for grace, and all the supplies of it; they boast in him for righteousness and strength, and rely upon him for life and salvation:

all vessels of small quantity; from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flacons; meaning those of his family, that were some of lesser, others of greater capacities, for whom he provided places and posts under him, suitable thereunto; none were forgotten or neglected by him: this simile, of vessels of various sorts and sizes, is made use of, in perfect agreement with Eliakim's being compared to a nail, on which vessels in a house are hung by their handles. The Targum is,

“from young men to little ones; from the priests clothed with the ephod, to the Levites that held the psalteries.”

In the typical sense, it is to be understood of the vessels of mercy; some of which are larger, and others lesser; some capable of receiving more grace and larger gifts, and others less; to whom Christ communicates, and whom he fills, according to their capacities; all whose wants he supplies, and whose persons he supports; he fills them with his grace, and he fits them for glory; (see ^{<0123>}Romans 9:23 ^{<0124>}2 Timothy 2:20,21).

Ver. 25. *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, &c.]* That Shebna is deposed, and Eliakim put in his place:

shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; meaning, not Eliakim before spoken of, who really was a nail fastened in a sure place, and not to be removed; but Shebna, who thought himself to be as a nail in a sure place, being put into it by the king, and supported by his authority, and courted by his friends and flatterers; for to him the whole preceding prophecy is directed, which is carried down to this verse; for all that is said of the glory and usefulness of his successor Eliakim was to be told to him, which would make it still the more grievous to him, to be degraded and disgraced as he would be, signified by his being removed, cast down, and falling:

and the burden that [was] upon it shall be cut off; those that were dependent upon him, his family, his flatterers, and friends, such whom he had raised by his influence and authority to considerable places, and whom he supported in them; these would fall with him, as is usual when a royal favourite, or prime minister of state, falls into disgrace, and is removed; an instance of this may be seen in Haman, whose family and friends were involved in the same ruin with him, (^{<1792>}Esther 9:12-14) and it may be observed, that many dependents, which a minister of state always has, are a burden to him. The Targum interprets this of the burden of prophecy; and Jarchi says, that some explain it thus,

“the prophecy, which thou prophesiest, concerning it, shall be confirmed;”

as follows:

for the Lord hath spoken [it]; and therefore it shall come to pass;

as the Targum,

“for, so it is decreed by the word of the Lord.”