

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 22

This chapter is a prophecy of what should befall the sons of Josiah, Jehoahaz or Shallum; Jehoiakim and Jeconiah. It begins with an exhortation to the then reigning prince, Jehoiakim, his family and court, to do justice, relieve the oppressed, and refrain from doing injury to any; with a promise of prosperity upon so doing, (²²¹Jeremiah 22:1-4); but, on the contrary behaviour, the king's family, however precious they had been in the sight of the Lord, should be destroyed, by persons described as fit for such work, which would occasion others to inquire the cause of such destruction; when it would be told them, it was for their apostasy from the Lord, their breaking covenant with him, and their idolatry, (^{221b}Jeremiah 22:5-9); then of Shallum, who was then carried captive, it is predicted that he should never return more, which was matter of greater lamentation than the death of his father Josiah, (^{221c}Jeremiah 22:10-12); next Jehoiakim, the present king on the throne, is reproved, and a woe denounced upon him for his injustice, luxury, covetousness, rapine, and murders, (^{221d}Jeremiah 22:13-17); and it is particularly threatened that he should die unlamented, and have no burial, (^{221e}Jeremiah 22:18,19); and then the people of the land are called upon to mourning and lamentation, their kings one after another being carried captive, (^{221f}Jeremiah 22:20-23); also Jeconiah the king's son, and who succeeded him, is threatened with rejection from the Lord, and a delivery of him up into the hand of the king of Babylon, with exile in a strange country, and death there, and that without children; so that Solomon's line should cease in him, (^{221g}Jeremiah 22:24-30).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, go down to the house of the king of Judah,* etc.] To the palace of Jehoiakim, who was now the reigning king; the prophet is bid to go down to it, because, as Kimchi thinks, he was now upon the mountain of the house, or in the temple, from whence to the king's house there was a descent:

and speak there this word; of prophecy, relating to the several kings hereafter mentioned. This prophecy was delivered some years before that in the preceding chapter, though it stands here. It is indeed by some

thought to be repeated here on occasion of what is before said, and for the confirmation of it, putting in mind of what he had prophesied in former times: and they render the words, with which it begins, “thus hath the Lord said”^{f432}; so he said to me years ago; which agrees with what is now delivered.

Ver. 2. *And say, hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah,* etc.] O Jehoiakim king of Judah, hear the word of the King of kings; listen to it, and obey it, as kings ought to do; and it is for their good, as well as it is their duty, so to do:

that sittest upon the throne of David; whom he mentions, to put him in mind of his illustrious ancestor, whose successor he was, that he might be prompted to follow his example:

thou, and thy servants, and that people that enter in by these gates; the king and his courtiers, his nobles and privy counsellors, that were continually waiting upon him, and were frequently passing and repassing the gates of the palace; for not the gates of the court in the temple are meant, as Kimchi suggests; and all other people, that either waited on or came to the king, upon business, with their suits, and to have their causes heard and tried.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord, execute ye judgment and righteousness,* etc.] Judge righteous Judgment; give the cause to whom it belongs, without respect of persons, and without a bribe or corruption; do no unrighteousness to any, by withholding from them what is due unto them, which was what this prince was chargeable with, (²²¹³Jeremiah 22:13);

and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; that was robbed or wronged of his property by one superior to him in power or cunning; (see Gill on “²¹¹²Jeremiah 21:12”);

and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow: who are not in a situation, and in such a condition and circumstances, as to defend themselves; and whom God has a peculiar regard unto; and therefore they who are his deputies and vicegerents, as kings and civil magistrates are, ought to protect such persons, and neither grieve and injure them themselves, nor suffer others to do it:

neither shed innocent blood in this place; to grieve and wrong the above persons is a very great evil, but to shed the blood of innocent persons is a

greater still; and this is aggravated by being committed by such who are set over men to secure and preserve their properties and their lives; and such heinous sins as these the present reigning king of Judah was guilty of; which is the reason of their being mentioned; (see ^{<227>}Jeremiah 22:17).

Ver. 4. *For if ye do this thing indeed*, etc.] Or, “in doing do this word”^{f433}; diligently and carefully attend to this word of exhortation, and constantly perform the duties required:

then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David; or, upon the throne for David: in his room and stead, as successors of his; or of his lineage and descent, as the Vulgate Latin version. The meaning is, that should the kings of Judah do the duty of their office, before pointed at, there should never be any want of successors of the seed of David; but there should be a race of kings descending from him, and sitting on his throne in all after ages, who should dwell in the royal palace, and go in and out at the gates of it; and they should also live in great pomp and splendour, in royal dignity, answerable to their characters:

riding in chariots, and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people; the king, his nobles, and other his attendants; some on one, and some on another, when they went out or came in; (see ^{<475>}Jeremiah 17:25).

Ver. 5. *But if ye will not hear these words*, etc.] Will give no attention, and yield no obedience to them:

I swear by myself, saith the Lord; and by a greater he cannot swear; and that is the reason why he swears by himself, (^{<863>}Hebrews 6:13); and as, when he swears to a promise, it shows the immutability of it, the certainty of its performance, and that it is irreversible, and never repented of, nor revoked; so it is when he swears to a threatening. The Targum is,

“by my word I swear:”

that this house shall become a desolation; meaning not the temple, nor the city, but the king’s palace.

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord unto the king’s house of Judah*, etc.] That is, to the family of the king of Judah; though it may be rendered, “concerning the house of the king of Judah”^{f434}; and so refer to his palace as before:

thou [art] Gilead unto me, [and] the head of Lebanon; or, though like to Gilead (which was a very fruitful country) for wealth, riches, and all kind of valuable things; and like to the top of Mount Lebanon^{f435}, being set with tall cedars, for stateliness. So the Targum is,

“although thou art beloved before me more than the sanctuary, which is high upon the top of the mountains:”

or thou shall be as Gilead, and Mount Lebanon, which belonged to the ten tribes of Israel, and are put for the whole kingdom of Israel, which was wasted by the king of Assyria; and in like condition should the royal palace at Jerusalem be, notwithstanding all its riches and grandeur, and so the city and temple likewise; as follows:

[yet] surely I will make thee a wilderness, [and] cities [which] are not inhabited; though as fruitful as Gilead, yet shall become like a barren desert; and though full of children, courtiers, princes, and nobles, yet shall be like cities quite depopulated: or, “if I do not make thee”^{f436}, etc. it is in the form of an oath, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; and to be supplied thus, if I do not do as I have said, let me never be believed; let me be reckoned a liar, or not thought to be God, and the like. It shows the certain accomplishment of these things.

Ver. 7. *And I will prepare destroyers against thee*, etc.] The Chaldeans, men of savage dispositions, bent upon the destruction of their neighbours; and who had already destroyed many nations, and so fit instruments for such service, as after mentioned; and who yet did not come merely of themselves, but were moved and directed to it by the powerful and all wise providence of God, in consequence of a previous preparation and appointment of them by the Lord in his counsels and purposes. It is, in the original text, “I will sanctify destroyers”^{f437}; and not only intends a purpose and design; but suggests, that what they should do by his will and order would be consistent with his holiness and justice; and also that being prepared and ready, they might quickly expect a visit from them:

everyone with his weapons; of war, or slaughter weapons, as in (^{310D}Ezekiel 9:2); or, “a man and his weapons”^{f438}; not a single man only, as Nebuchadnezzar, but him and his army; everyone of the destroyers prepared with proper instruments to do execution: and

they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast [them] into the fire; the sons of the king, the princes of the blood, the nobles of the land, and other

persons of rank and distinction, comparable to the tall cedars of Lebanon; so the Targum,

“and they shall slay the beauty of thy mighty ones, as the trees of a forest are cut down, and cast into the fire;”

or else the stately palaces of the king and his nobles, and other beautiful buildings, which were lined and ceiled with cedar, are here meant; and which the Chaldeans burnt with fire, (²⁶²³Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 8. *And many nations shall pass by this city*, etc.] After it is burned down and destroyed; that is, people out of many nations travelling that way:

and they shall say every man to his neighbour; as in company together, passing along the ruined walls of the city:

wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city? so fortified and so full of people; the metropolis of the whole nation; the greatest city in the east; yea, the joy of the whole earth; a city peculiarly dear to the Lord; greatly honoured by him with his presence, worship, and ordinances, and yet now in ruins; how comes this to pass? they see and acknowledge the hand of the Lord in it, having a better notion of things than the Jews themselves had.

Ver. 9. *Then they shall answer*, etc.] Or, “it shall be answered”^{f439}; by some in company, acquainted with the history of this people:

because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God; the Lord was the God of these people; he chose them for his peculiar people, and distinguished them by his favours from others; a covenant was made with them, in which many good things were promised them upon their obedience; this was kept by him, but forsaken and broken by them; they forsook their covenant God, his law and his worship; and that was the cause of their ruin:

and worshipped other gods, and served them; the idols of the people, as the Targum; they left the true God, who had done great and good things for them, and worshipped those who were only gods by name, and not by nature; and served stocks and stones, the vanities of the Gentiles, who could not bestow one good thing on them; such were their stupidity and ingratitude, and therefore very justly given up to destruction. This seems to

refer, as Cocceius thinks, not to the first destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, when it had not so clear and full an accomplishment; but to the second destruction of it by the Romans, and the times following that; when the Gospel being preached among the Gentiles, they had a better understanding of the true God, and of his covenant, and of the vanity of idolatry, and of the state of the Jewish nation, and the religion of it, and of the true causes of their ruin.

Ver. 10. *Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him*, etc.] Not Jehoiakim, as Jarchi and Kimchi; but King Josiah, slain by Pharaohnecho; who, being a pious prince, a good king, and very useful, and much beloved by his people, great lamentation was made for him by them, and by the prophet also; but now he exhorts them to cease weeping, or at least not to weep so much for him, it being well with him, and he taken away from evil to come; and especially since they had other and worse things to lament; (see ^{<1485t>}2 Chronicles 35:24,25);

[but] weep sore for him that goeth away: or, “in weeping weep”^{f440}: weep bitterly, and in good earnest; there is reason for it; for him that was about to go, or was gone out of his own land, even Jehoahaz or Shallum, after mentioned, who reigned but three months, and was put into bonds by Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, and carried by him thither, (^{<1480t>}2 Chronicles 36:4);

for he shall return no more, nor see his native country; for he died in Egypt, (^{<1233t>}2 Kings 23:34); Jarchi interprets the dead, in the first clause, of Jehoiakim, who died before the gate, when they had bound him to carry him captive, (^{<1486t>}2 Chronicles 36:6); “and him that goeth away”, of Jeconiah and Zedekiah, who were both carried captive; and so Kimchi; but the former interpretation is best. Some understand this not of particular persons, but of the people in general; signifying that they were more happy that were dead, and less to be lamented, than those that were alive, and would be carried captive, and never see their own country any more; (see ^{<2101t>}Ecclesiastes 4:2); but particular persons seem manifestly designed.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord touching Shallum*, etc.] Not Shallum the fourth son of Josiah, (^{<1185t>}1 Chronicles 3:15); for it is not likely that he should immediately succeed his father; nor Zedekiah, as Jarchi; nor Jeconiah, as Kimchi; but Jehoahaz, as Aben Ezra; who seems to have had several names, as Johanan, (^{<1185t>}1 Chronicles 3:15); and Shallum here:

the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father; the same is said of Jehoahaz, (^{<48B>}2 Chronicles 36:1);

which went forth out of this place; out of Jerusalem, being put down there from his throne by Pharaohnecho, and carried by him into Egypt, (^{<48B>}2 Chronicles 36:3,4);

he shall not return thither any more; he died in Egypt, or however out of his own land; but was alive when this prophecy was delivered out, which was in the reign of his brother Jehoiakim, as some following verses show.

Ver. 12. *But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive*, etc.] Even in Egypt, where Pharaohnecho and his army carried him captive, as before observed:

and he shall see his land no more; the land of Judah, where he was born, and over which he had been king: this is repeated to show the certainty of it, and what reason there was for the above lamentation; since the people might have been in hopes of the return of him, but now they are assured they had no ground for it; who, though he was not a good prince, yet perhaps not so bad as his brother Jehoiakim, who succeeded him; who appears, by what follows, to have been a very unjust, tyrannical, and oppressive prince; and therefore there was great occasion for mourning on the account of Shallum, who very likely was more promising.

Ver. 13. *Woe unto him that buildeth his house by righteousness, and his chambers by wrong*, etc.] This respects Jehoiakim, the then reigning king; who, not content with the palace the kings of Judah before him had lived in, built another; or however enlarged that, and made great alterations in it; but this he did either with money ill gotten, or perverted to a wrong use, which ought to have been otherwise laid out; or by not paying for the materials of whom they were bought, or the workmen for their workmanship; and perhaps this may be the reason why so much notice is taken of the king's house or palace in the former part of the chapter, and why it is threatened with desolation, (^{<20B>}Jeremiah 22:1,4-6);

[that] useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; or, "that serveth [himself] of his neighbour freely"; or, "makes him serve freely"^{f441}; "and giveth him not his work"^{f442}; makes him, work for nothing; gives him no wages for it, but keeps back the hire of the labourers; which is a crying sin in any person, and much more in a king; (see ^{<58B>}James 5:4).

Ver. 14. *That saith, I will build me a wide house*, etc.] Or, “a house of measures”, or, “dimensions”^{f443}; a very large house, whose length and breadth measure much consisting of many spacious rooms, upper as well as lower; as follows:

and large chambers; or, “widened ones”; very spacious and roomy; or “aired”, or “airy”^{f444} ones”; through which the wind blows, or into which much air comes; so that they were good summer chambers, for which they might be built:

and cutteth him out windows; to let in light and air, as well as for ornament. Some render it, “and teareth my windows”^{f445}; as if he had taken some of the windows of the temple, and placed them in his palace, and so was guilty of sacrilege; but this is not very likely:

and [it is] ceiled with cedar; wainscotted with it; or the roof of it was covered with cedar, as Jarchi; or its beams and rafters were made of cedar, as Kimchi; it might be lined throughout with cedar:

and painted with vermilion. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “sinopis”; so called from Sinope, a city in Pontus, where it is found; of which Pliny says^{f446} there are three sorts, one red, another reddish, and a third between them both: this is the same with “minium” or vermilion. Strabo^{f447} says, in Cappadocia the best Sinopic minium or vermilion is produced, and which vies with that of Spain; and he says it is called sinopic, because the merchants used to bring it to that place (Sinope) before the commerce of the Ephesians reached the men of this country, Cappadocia; other versions^{f448}, besides the Vulgate Latin, so render it here. Schindler^{f449} renders the Hebrew word by this; and also by “cinnabar”, which is a red mineral stone, and chiefly found in quicksilver mines; and may be thought to be quicksilver petrified, and fixed by means of sulphur, and a subterraneous heat; for artificial cinnabar is made of a mixture of mercury and sulphur sublimed, and reduced into a kind of fine red glebe; and this is called by the painters vermilion; and is made more beautiful by grinding it with gum water, and a little saffron; which two drugs prevent its growing black: and there are two kinds of vermilion; the one natural, which is found in some silver mines, in form of a ruddy sand, of a bright beautiful red colour; the other is made of artificial cinnabar, ground up with white wine, and afterwards with the whites of eggs. There are two sorts of it that we have; the one of a deep red; the other pale; but are the same; the difference of colour only proceeding from the cinnabar’s being more or less

ground; when fine ground, the vermilion is pale, and is preferred to the coarser and redder. It is of considerable use among painters in oil and miniature^{f450}; and here it may be rendered, “anoined with minium” or “vermilion”^{f451}; but it is questionable whether this vermilion was known so early. Kimchi here says, it is the same which the Arabians call “zingapher”, or cinnabar. The Hebrew word is “shashar”, which Junius and Tremellius translate “indico”^{f452}; and observe from Pliny^{f453}, that there is a people in India called Sasuri, from whence it is brought; but this is of a different colour from minium or vermilion; the one is blue, the other red; but, be it which it will, the painting was for ornament; and either colours look beautiful.

Ver. 15. *Shalt thou reign because thou closest [thyself] in cedar?* etc.] Dost thou think that thou shalt reign long, and thy throne be established firm and secure, because of thy cedar wainscot? as if that was a protection to thee, and were like the fortifications of a city or tower; when it may easily be broke to pieces, or burnt with fire; and must be a poor defence against a powerful enemy. The Targum is,

“dost thou think to be as the first king?”

as David; to be as great a prince, to keep as grand a court, and live in as splendid a manner, as he? The Septuagint version, instead of “ares”, a cedar, reads “Ahaz”, and takes it for the proper name of a king of Judah; and the Arabic version reads “Ahab”; and so the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint; and both confound it with the next clause; the former rendering the words thus, “shalt thou reign, that thou provokest in”, or “after the manner of Ahaz thy father?” and the latter thus,

“thou shalt not reign, because thou imitatest the original of Ahab thy father;”

but both wrong; though Grotius seems to approve of this reading:

did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? that is, Josiah his father, who ate and drank in moderation, and lived cheerfully and comfortably; and kept a good table like a prince, without such a magnificent palace as he, his son, had built; and without oppressing his subjects, and detaining the hire of the labourer: living in a grand manner, becoming a king, may be done consistent with doing justice and judgment; let but that be done, and a prince will not be blamed for living like himself, and for supporting the dignity of his character and office, as Josiah did:

[and] then [it was] well with him; or, “therefore [it was] well with him”^{f454} he was blessed of God, and was prosperous and successful; he was happy himself as a prince, and his people under him, both enjoying peace and prosperity; there are never better times than when justice is done; by it the throne is established.

Ver. 16. *He judged the cause of the poor and needy*, etc.] Who could not defend themselves against the rich and the mighty; he took their cause in hand, and, having heard it, determined it in their favour, and did them justice, as princes and civil magistrates ought to do:

then [it was] well [with him]; this is repeated, not only to show the certainty of it, but that it might be observed, and his example followed:

[was] not this to know me? saith the Lord; it is not by words only, but by deeds, that men show that they know the Lord; for some in words profess to know him, who in works deny him; when princes do the duty of their office, they thereby declare that they know and own the Lord, by, and under whom, they reign; that they have the fear of him before their eyes; this is a practical knowledge of him, and is well pleasing to him. The Targum is,

“is not this the knowledge with which I am well pleased? saith the Lord.”

Ver. 17. *But thine eyes and thine heart [are] not but for thy covetousness*, etc.] He was wholly intent upon gratifying that lust; his heart was meditating, contriving, and forming schemes for that purpose; and his eyes were looking out here and there for proper objects and opportunities to exercise it:

and for to shed innocent blood; in order to get their money, goods, and possessions into his hands; avarice often leads to murder:

and for oppression, and for violence, to do [it]; by making incursions, and seizing upon the properties of men, and converting them to his own use; so true it is, that covetousness, or the love of money, is the root of all evil, (⁵¹⁶⁰1 Timothy 6:10).

Ver. 18. *Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim*, etc.] This shows who is before spoken of and described; Jehoiakim, the then reigning king in Judah, whose name was Eliakim, but was changed by Pharaoh king

of Egypt, when he deposed his brother Jehoahaz or Shallum, and set him on the throne, (~~1234~~2 Kings 23:34);

the son of Josiah king of Judah; and who seems to have been his eldest son, though his brother Jehoahaz reigned before him; for he was but twenty three years of age when he began his reign, and he reigned but three months; and Jehoiakim was twenty five years old when he succeeded him, (~~1234~~2 Kings 23:31,36); his relation to Josiah is mentioned, not so much for his honour, but rather to his disgrace, and as an aggravation of his wickedness, that having so religious a parent, and such a religious education, and the advantage of such an example, and yet did so sadly degenerate: and it also suggests that this would be no security to him from the divine vengeance; but rather provoke it, to deal more severely with him;

they shall not lament for him; that is, his people, his subjects, shall not lament for him when dead, as they did for his father Josiah; so far from having any real grief or inward sorrow on account of his death, that they should not so much as outwardly express any, or use the common form at meeting together:

[saying], ah my brother! or, ah sister! a woman meeting her brother would not say to him, O my brother, what bad news is this! we have lost our king! nor he reply to her, O sister, it is so, the loss is great indeed! for this is not to be understood of the funeral “lessus” at the interment of a king or queen; lamenting them under these appellations of brother or sister, which is denied of this prince. Kimchi thinks it has reference to his relations, as that they should not mourn for him, and say, “ah my brother!” nor for his wife, who died at the same time, though not mentioned, ah sister! both should die unlamented, as by their subjects, so by their nearest friends and relations;

they shall not lament for him, [saying], ah lord! or, ah his glory! O our liege lord and sovereign, he is gone! where are his glory and majesty now? where are his crown, his sceptre, his robes, and other ensigns of royalty? So the Targum,

“woe, or alas, for the king; alas, for his kingdom;”

a heavy stroke, a sorrowful melancholy providence this! but nothing of this kind should be said; as he lived not beloved, because of his oppression and violence, so he died without any lamentation for him.

Ver. 19. *He shall be buried with the burial of an ass*, etc.] Have no burial at all, or no other than what any brute creature has; which, when it dies, is cast into a ditch, and becomes the food of dogs, and the fowls of the air. The “ass” is mentioned, as being a sordid stupid creature; and such an one was this king;

drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem; as the carcass of a beast is dragged about by dogs; or as a malefactor, when executed, is dragged and cast into a ditch: this perhaps was done by the Chaldeans, who, when he was slain, dragged him along, and cast him beyond the gates of Jerusalem. So Josephus^{f455} says, that when Nebuchadnezzar entered Jerusalem, he slew the most robust and beautiful with Jehoiakim their king, and ordered him to be cast without the walls unburied; and so, though he is said to “sleep with his fathers”, yet not to be buried with them, (^{<1216>}2 Kings 24:6). Kimchi says that he died without Jerusalem, as they were carrying him into captivity a second time; and the Chaldeans would not suffer him to be buried. Jerom reports, from the Hebrew history, that he was killed by the robbers and thieves of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites. Some think, that as he was bound in chains, in order to be carried to Babylon, that he was had there, and there died, and after his death used in this ignominious manner: and the words will bear to be rendered, “cast forth far beyond the gates of Jerusalem”^{f456}; even as far as Babylon; (see ^{<4416>}2 Chronicles 36:6).

Ver. 20. *Go up to Lebanon, and cry*, etc.] These words are directed to Jerusalem and its inhabitants, and to the people of the Jews; not to go up to the temple, as the Targum interprets it, so called, because made of the wood of Lebanon, as in (^{<3810>}Zechariah 11:1); or, as the Rabbins say, because it made white the sins of Israel; but the mountain of Lebanon, and from thence call to their neighbours for help in their present distress, as the Assyrians and Egyptians;

and lift up thy voice in Bashan; another high hill in the land of Israel. The Targum interprets this also of the gates of the mountain of the house; so called, as Jarchi thinks, because made of the oaks of Bashan; or, as Kimchi, because there were beasts continually there for sacrifice, as in Bashan, a pasture for cattle; but the mountain itself is intended;

and cry from the passages; or “from Abarim”; a mountain of this name on the borders of Moab, (^{<0272>}Numbers 27:12). Now these several high mountains are named, because from hence they might look around them,

and call to their neighbours, if any of them could help them: it is ironically spoken, for it is suggested that none of them could:

for all thy lovers are destroyed; their friends and allies, with whom they had not only entered into leagues, but had committed spiritual fornication with them; that is, idolatry, as the Egyptians and Assyrians; but these were now subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and were at least so weakened and destroyed by him, that they could give no assistance to the Jews; (see ^{<1234>}2 Kings 24:7).

Ver. 21. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity*, etc.] Or “prosperities”, or “tranquillities”^{>1457}; when in their greatest affluence, in the height of it; this he did, when he sent to them his servants the prophets, as the Targum, and by them exhorted, reproved, and advised them:

[but] thou saidst, I will not hear; this was the language of their hearts and actions, though not of their mouths:

this [hath been] thy manner from thy youth; from the time they came out of Egypt, and first became a church and body politic; while they were in the wilderness; or when first settled in the land of Canaan: this was the infancy of their state; and from that time it was their manner and custom to reject the word of the Lord, and turn a deaf ear to it:

that thou obeyest not my voice; in his law, and by his prophets.

Ver. 22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors*, etc.] King, nobles, counsellors, priests, prophets, and elders of the people; they shall be carried away as chaff before the wind, or perish as trees and fruits are blasted with an east wind; to which Nebuchadnezzar and his army are sometimes compared; (see ^{<2487>}Jeremiah 18:17). The Targum is,

“all thy governors shall be scattered to every wind;”

and thy lovers shall go into captivity: the Assyrians and Egyptians, as before; (see ^{<2452>}Jeremiah 52:31,32);

surely then thou shalt be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness; being disappointed of all protection from their governors at home, and of all help from their allies abroad; and will then, when too late, be convinced of all their wickedness, and ashamed of it.

Ver. 23. *O inhabitant of Lebanon*, etc.] Jerusalem is meant, and the inhabitants of it, so called, because they lived near Lebanon, or in that land in which Lebanon was; or rather because they dwelt in houses made of the wood of Lebanon; and which stood as thick as the trees in the forest of Lebanon; and where they thought themselves safe and secure, according to the next clause; not but that there were inhabitants of the mountain of Lebanon, called Druses; and there were towns and villages on it, inhabited by people, as there are to this day. After four hours and a half travelling up the ascent, from the foot of the mountain, there is, as travellers^{f458} inform us, a small pretty village, called Eden; and besides that, at some distance from it, another called Canobine, where there is a convent of the Maronites, and is the seat of their patriarch; and near it a valley of that name, full of hermitages, cells and monasteries; but the former are here meant;

that makest thy nests in the cedars; in towns, palaces, and houses, covered, ceiled, rafted, and wainscotted with cedars; here they lived at ease and security, as birds in a nest. The Targum is,

“who dwellest in the house of the sanctuary, and among kings?
nourishing thy children;”

how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail? that is, either thou wilt seek grace and favour at the hand of God, and make supplication to him; thou wilt then be an humble supplicant, when in distress, though now proud and haughty^{f459}: or what favour wilt thou then find among those that come to waste and destroy thee? This refers to the calamity coming upon them by the Chaldeans, as the following words show:

Ver. 24. [*As*] *I live, saith the Lord*, etc.] The form of an oath, used to express the greater certainty of what is after delivered: swearing by his life is swearing by himself; (see ^{<3863>}Hebrews 6:13);

though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; the same with Jeconiah, so nicknamed by way of contempt; and it may be to denote the diminution of his glory and kingdom, and the shortness of his reign:

were the signet upon my right hand; ever so near to him, or ever so much valued by him, as he had been before, and so constantly cared for and regarded by him; as a ring, with anything respectable engraved on it, is constantly wore by persons, and greatly valued; especially such as had on

them the image or picture of a person loved, as was usual in some countries, to which the allusion is by some thought to be: so the friends of Epicurus used to have his image engraved upon their rings, which they wore on their fingers in respect to him, and as an omen of good to themselves^{f460}; (see ^{<2186>}Song of Solomon 8:6 ^{<2396>}Isaiah 49:16 ^{<3023>}Haggai 2:23);

yet would I pluck thee thence: with great displeasure and indignation: it designs being removed from his throne and kingdom, and out of his native land, and carried into a far country, as follows.

Ver. 25. *And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life*, etc.] Cruel and bloodthirsty enemies, whom nothing would satisfy but his life; such were the persons following:

and into the hand [of them] whose face thou fearest: being a terrible savage people, to be dreaded both for their number and their cruelty; a strange change this, to be removed out of the hand of God into the hand of such an enemy;

even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; (see Gill on ^{<2202>}Jeremiah 21:2”);

and into the hand of the Chaldeans: who were the merciless and formidable people before mentioned: and this was fulfilled within three months after Jeconiah or Jehoiachin began to reign, and when he was but eighteen years of age, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 24:8,10-12).

Ver. 26. *And I will cast thee out*, etc.] Out of his palace, out of the city of Jerusalem, and out of the land of Judea:

and thy mother that bare thee; who very probably was a bad woman, and had brought up her son in an evil way, and had led him on and encouraged him in it, by her own example, and had been a partner with him in his sins: her name was Nehushta, a daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem; and as it was here predicted of her, so it was accomplished, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 24:8,15); it is very likely Jeconiah had no children before the captivity, since no mention is made of them, only of his mother that was cast out with him:

into another country, where ye were not born; the land of Chaldea, which was not the native place neither of him nor his mother; being both, as it seems probable, born in Jerusalem, or however in Judea:

and there shall ye die; both he and his mother; and so the Arabic version expresses it, “and there shall ye both die”; as no doubt they did, though we have no particular account of their death; as for Jeconiah, he lived a long time in captivity; it was in the “thirty seventh” year of his captivity that Evilmerodach king of Babylon showed favour to him above all the captive kings that were with him, and continued it to his death; but how long after that was is not known; (see ^{<3531>}Jeremiah 52:31-34).

Ver. 27. *But to the land whereunto they desire to return*, etc.] Or, “lift up their soul to return”^{f461}: either by making supplication to God, for it, (^{<3271>}Psalms 25:1); or buoying up themselves with vain hopes, founded upon the declarations of the false prophets, that they should return; and to which no doubt they had a natural desire, and comforted themselves with the hopes of it; but all in vain:

thither shall they not return; for they were to die, as before predicted, in another country, as they did, and never saw their own any more.

Ver. 28. *[Is] this man Coniah a despised broken idol?* etc.] Or like an idol that is nothing in the world, and like a broken one, that, whatever worship before was paid to it, has now none at all, but is despised by its votaries? he is such an one; though he was idolized by his people when he first came to the throne; but now his power and government being broken, and he carried captive, was despised by all; as his being called Coniah, and “this man” or fellow, show; which are used of him in a way of reproach and contempt;

[is he] a vessel wherein [is] no pleasure? he is. He is like a vessel made for dishonour, or is used for the most contemptible service; or like one that is cracked, or broken, or defiled, that no use can be made of it, or any delight taken in it; it is not fit to set up, to be looked at, or to be made use of;

wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed; which were in his loins, and were begotten by him in captivity; (see ^{<3371>}1 Chronicles 3:17,18); and so said to be cast out with him, when he was cast out of the land of Judea; just as Levi paid tithes in Abraham before he was born, (^{<3109>}Hebrews 7:9,10);

and are cast into a land which they know not? where they had no friends and acquaintance; doubtless it was for his sins and transgressions, and those of his people.

Ver. 29. *O earth, earth, earth,* etc.] Not Coniah himself, an earthly man; but either the inhabitants of the whole earth, or of the land of Israel; or rather the earth, on which men dwell, is here called upon as a witness to what is after said; to rebuke the stupidity of the people, and to quicken their attention to somewhat very remarkable and worthy of notice, and therefore the word is repeated three times. Some think reference is had to the land from which, and that to which, the Jews removed, and the land of Israel, through which they passed. So the Targum,

“out of his own land they carried him captive into another land; O land of Israel, receive the words of the Lord.”

Jarchi mentions another reason of this threefold appellation, because the land of Israel was divided into three parts, Judea, beyond Jordan, and Galilee;

hear the word of the Lord; which follows.

Ver. 30. *Thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless,* etc.] That is, Coniah, or Jeconiah; who though he had children in the captivity, yet they died in it, or however never succeeded him in the throne. This, to show the certainty of the thing, the Lord would have written. The speech is directed, as some think, to the angels, or to the prophets; though the words may be rendered impersonally, “let this man be written childless”, it may be set down, and taken for a sure and certain thing, as though it was written with a pen of iron, that he shall be alone, and die without children, and have none to reign after him;

a man [that] shall not prosper in his days; he sat but three months and ten days upon the throne, and all the rest of his days he lived in captivity, (^{418D}2 Chronicles 36:9); so that he was a very unfortunate prince;

for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah; none of them were so prosperous and happy as to arrive to the royal dignity, or to sit on the throne of David, and be kings of Judah. Here ended the race of kings of the house of David, until the King Messiah came; for though there were of his line that were governors of Judah, as Zerubbabel, yet not kings. Moreover, Jeconiah was the last of the house of David in the line of Solomon. Salathiel, of whom was Zerubbabel governor of Judah, was the son of Neri, who descended from Nathan the son of David; (see ^{418E}Luke 3:29,31), compared with (⁴¹¹²Matthew 1:12);