

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 25

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of Judea by the king of Babylon; and also of Babylon itself, after the Jews' captivity of seventy years; and likewise of all the nations round about. The date of this prophecy is in (²⁴⁵¹Jeremiah 25:1); when the prophet puts the Jews in mind of the prophecies that had been delivered unto them by himself and others, for some years past, without effect, (²⁴⁵²Jeremiah 25:2-7); wherefore they are threatened with the king of Babylon, that he should come against them, and strip them of all their desirable things; make their land desolate, and them captives for seventy years, (²⁴⁵³Jeremiah 25:8-11); at the expiration of which he in his turn shall be punished, and the land of Chaldea laid waste, and become subject to other nations and kings, (²⁴⁵⁴Jeremiah 25:12-14); and by a cup of wine given to all the nations round about, is signified the utter ruin of them, and who are particularly mentioned by name, (²⁴⁵⁵Jeremiah 25:15-26); which is confirmed by beginning with the city of Jerusalem, and the destruction of that, (²⁴⁵⁶Jeremiah 25:27-29); wherefore the prophet is bid to prophesy against them, and to declare the Lord's controversy with them, and that there should be a slaughter of them from one end of the earth to the other, (²⁴⁵⁷Jeremiah 25:30-33); upon which the shepherds, kings, and rulers of them, are called to lamentation and howling, (²⁴⁵⁸Jeremiah 25:34-38).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah*, etc.] Not only in the city of Jerusalem, but in the whole land of Judea. This prophecy concerns them all; their repentance and reformation, to which they are exhorted; or their invasion, desolation, and captivity, with which they are threatened. Before the prophet was sent to the king of Judah only, (²⁴⁵⁹Jeremiah 22:1); now to all the people:

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; in the latter part of the third, and beginning of the fourth year of his reign; (see ²⁴⁶⁰Daniel 1:1);

this [was] the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon: in which he began to reign with his father, for he reigned two years with him; who is the Nabopolassar of Ptolemy. This was in the year of the world 3397, and before Christ 607, according to Bishop Usher^{f513}.

Ver. 2. *The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah,* etc.] Perhaps at one of the three feasts, at which all the males appeared in Jerusalem; for it cannot be thought that he went up and down throughout all parts of the land to deliver this prophecy, but to as many of them as he found in Jerusalem in any place, at any time; and none so likely as what is mentioned:

and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: to whom he had an opportunity of speaking frequently:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 3. *From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day,* etc.] The year in which Jeremiah began to prophesy, (~~2400~~Jeremiah 1:2);

(that [is], the three and twentieth year); for Josiah reigned one and thirty years; so that Jeremiah prophesied nineteen years in his reign; and now it was the fourth of Jehoiakim's, which make twenty three years; so long the prophet had been prophesying to this people:

the word of the Lord hath come unto me; from time to time, during that space of twenty three years; and which he diligently, constantly, and faithfully delivered unto them; as follows:

and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking: as soon as ever he had a word from the Lord, he brought it to them, and took the most proper and seasonable time to inculcate it to them; in the morning, and after, he had had a vision or dream in the night from the Lord;

but ye have not hearkened; they took no notice of it; turned a deaf ear to it; however, did not obey or act as they were directed and exhorted to.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets,* etc.] Not only him, but many others, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and others:

rising early and sending [them]; not only the prophet, but the Lord himself is said to rise early, and send his prophets to them; which denotes his great care and concern for this people for their good; (see ^{<4075>}Jeremiah 7:25);

but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear; which is an aggravation of their sin; that whereas they had one prophet after another sent to them, and sent by the Lord himself; he rising early, and sending them; and they rising early, being sent to do their message; and yet were not hearkened and attended to.

Ver. 5. *They said*, etc.] The prophets: this was the substance of their discourses and prophecies, what follows:

turn ye again now everyone from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings; repent of sins, and reform from them; particularly their idolatries, to which they were prone, and are after mentioned:

and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you to your fathers for ever and ever; that is, the land of Canaan, which was given to them, and their fathers before them, by the Lord, for an everlasting inheritance, provided they behaved towards him aright; for they held the possession of it by their obedience to his law; and now, notwithstanding all that they had done, or had been threatened with; yet, if they repented and reformed, they should still dwell in the land, and enjoy it, and all the blessings and privileges of it.

Ver. 6. *And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them*, etc.] So long as they served the Lord God, they continued in their own land, in the comfortable enjoyment of all the blessings of it; for their government was a theocracy; God was their King; and as long as they served and worshipped him only, he protected and defended them; but when they forsook him, and went after other gods, and served and worshipped them, then they were threatened to be turned out of their land, and carried captive into other lands; and yet, after all, if they returned from their idolatries, and left off worshipping idols, the Lord was ready to receive them kindly, and continue his favours to them:

and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; their idols, which their own hands made, and then fell down to worship them; than which nothing can be more provoking to God:

and I will do you no hurt; by sword, or famine, or pestilence, or captivity; signifying the hurt he had threatened them with should not be done, provided they forsook their idolatrous worship; God does no hurt to his true worshippers; yea, he makes all things work together for their good.

Ver. 7. *Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord*, etc.] Though it was he that spake unto them by his prophets; and though it was so much to their own good and advantage; and the neglect of him and his word were so much to their disadvantage, and even ruin:

that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, to your own hurt: which, though not signed to do either, yet eventually did both; both provoked the Lord, and brought destruction upon themselves; for whatever is against the glory of God is to the hurt of man; and whatever provokes him is pernicious to them in its consequences.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] Of armies above and below; and so can do what he pleases in heaven and in earth:

because ye have not heard my words; by the prophets, so as to obey them; they had heard them externally, but did not observe to do them.

Ver. 9. *Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord*, etc.] The Targum is, the kingdoms of the north, the same with those in (²⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 1:15); even all those kingdoms which were subject to the king of Babylon, and lay north of Judea:

and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon my servant: though a great king, he was a servant of the Lord of hosts; his servant, both as a creature of his make, and as a king that ruled under him; and as he was an instrument in his hand to chastise his people the Jews; though it was not knowingly and with intention that he served the Lord:

and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof; the land of Judea, and its inhabitants; this was the Lord's doing; it was he that stirred, up the king of Babylon, and by his secret instinct and powerful providence brought him and his armies into Judea to spoil it, and the inhabitants of it Jehovah as it were marched at the head of them, and led them on, and brought them against the Jews, and delivered them into their hands:

and against all these nations round about; Egypt and others; so that the Jews could have no help from them; nor would application to them, and alliance with them, signify anything:

and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations; both the Jews and their neighbours; who should be an astonishment to some, and a hissing to others, and remain desolate for a long time; even till the seventy years were ended after mentioned.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness*, etc.] At their festivals, and nuptial solemnities:

the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; expressing their mutual love unto, and delight in, each other; so agreeable to one another and their friends: or it may mean those epithalamies, or nuptial songs, sung unto them by their friends:

the sound of the millstones; either the voice of those that sing at the mill while grinding; or rather the sound of the stones themselves used in grinding; either in grinding spices for the bride cakes; or rather in grinding corn for common use; and so denotes the taking away of bread corn from them, and the want of that. The sense is, there should be corn to grind, and so no use of the mill:

and the light of the candle; at their feasts and weddings, or rather, for common use; signifying that houses should be desolate, without inhabitants, no light in them, nor work to be done. The whole shows that they should be deprived of everything both for necessity and pleasure. John seems to have borrowed some phrases from hence, (⁴⁶⁸²Revelation 18:22,23); in which he appears to have followed the Hebrew text, and not the Greek version. The Targum of the last clause is,

“the voice of the company of those that sing at the light of candles.”

Ver. 11. *And this whole land shall be a desolation*, etc.] Not only the city of Jerusalem, but all Judea, without inhabitants, or very few, and shall be uncultivated, and become barren and unfruitful:

[and] an astonishment; to all other nations, and to all persons that pass through, beholding the desolations of it:

and other nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years; both the Jews, and other nations of Egypt, reckoning from the date of this prophecy, the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when Daniel and others were carried captive, (~~2000~~Daniel 1:1-6); to the first year of Cyrus.

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished,* etc.] Which were accomplished in the first year of Cyrus: they began with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned two years and two months with his father Nabopolassar; after that forty three years by himself; Evilmerodach two years: Neriglissar four years; Belshazzar or Nabonadius seventeen years; and Darius the Median two years; which all make sixty nine years and two months; and if ten months more be added to complete the said seventy years, it will carry the end of them to the first year of Cyrus^{f514}. These years are differently reckoned by others; by Spanhemius, from the first of Nebuchadnezzar, or fourth of Jehoiakim, to the destruction of the city under Zedekiah, nineteen years; thence to the death of Nebuchadnezzar, twenty four; then Evilmerodach, two; then the reign of Neriglissar, including some months of Laborosoarchod, five; then the years of Nabonadius, or Belshazzar, seventeen; and from his death, or the taking of Babylon, to the death of Darius the Mede, two years; which make sixty nine, exclusive of the first of Cyrus; and comes to much the same as the former. By James Alting thus; from the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, complete, to his death, twenty six years; Evilmerodach, twenty three; Belshazzar, three; Darius the Mede, eighteen, after the destruction of the Babylonish empire; which seems very wrong; better, by Dr. Lightfoot, thus; Nebuchadnezzar, forty five current; Evilmerodach, twenty three; and Belshazzar, three^{f515}. So the Jewish chronicle^{f516}:

[that] I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity; the king for his tyranny, and the nation for their idolatry; and both for these and other sins they were guilty of; for, though they did the will of God in carrying the Jews captive, they no doubt in their usage of them exceeded their commission, and were justly punishable for their iniquities. This is not to be understood of the present king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar; but of Nabonadius, or Belshazzar, whom the Lord punished by Cyrus; who appears to have been a very wicked man, and in the excess of not, profaning the vessels of the temple the night he was slain, (~~2000~~Daniel 5:1,2,30);

and the land of the Chaldeans; and will make it perpetual desolations; even as other nations had been made by them, (^{<239>}Jeremiah 25:9).

Ver. 13. *And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it,* etc.] By his prophets, and particularly by Jeremiah, as follows; for not one word that is spoken by the Lord, either in a way of promise or threatening, shall fail; his truth, power, and faithfulness, are engaged to accomplish all:

[even] all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations; the Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Edomites, Arabians, Persians, and also the Babylonians, in (^{<240>}Jeremiah 46:1-51:64), which prophecies, in the Greek version, immediately follow here, though in a confused manner; where some have thought they might be more regularly placed than as they are in the Hebrew copies, at the end of the book; but of this there seems to be no absolute necessity.

Ver. 14. *For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also,* etc.] Take their cities, seize upon the kingdoms, spoil them of their wealth and riches, and bring them into servitude to them: these “many nations”, which should and did do all this, were the Medes and Persians, and those that were subject to them, or were their allies and auxiliaries in this expedition; and the “great kings” were Cyrus and Darius, and those that were confederate with them:

and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands; as they have done to others, it shall be done to them; as they have served themselves of other nations, other nations shall serve themselves of them; as they have cruelly used others, they shall be used with cruelty themselves; and as they have made other countries desolate, their land shall become desolate also; not only their tyranny and cruelty, but all their other sins, shall receive a just recompence of reward.

Ver. 15. *For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me,* etc.] The prophet: *take the wine cup of this fury at my hand;* in a vision the Lord appeared to Jeremiah with a cup of wine in his hand, which he bid him take of him. It is usual in Scripture for the judgments of God on men to be signified by a cup of hot and intoxicating liquor, (^{<2517>}Isaiah 51:17,22) (^{<24912>}Jeremiah 49:12); particularly in (^{<4978>}Psalms 75:8); to which reference may be had; as John seems to refer to the passage here in (^{<640>}Revelation 14:10 16:19); called a cup, because they are in measure, and but small in comparison of what will

be inflicted in the world to come; and a cup of “fury”, because they proceed from the wrath of God, stirred up by the sins of men. Jarchi interprets this cup of the prophecy of vengeance, which the Lord delivered to Jeremiah; and not amiss:

and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it; prophesy unto them what wrath and ruin shall come upon them.

Ver. 16. *And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad,* etc.] The judgments foretold shall come upon them, whether they will or not; which will have such effects upon them, as intoxicating liquor has on drunken persons; make them shake and tremble, and reel to and fro, and toss and tumble about, and behave like madmen:

because of the sword that I will send among them; this explains what is meant by the wine cup of fury, the sword of a foreign enemy that shall enter among them and destroy; and which would make them tremble, and be at their wits’ end, like drunken and mad men.

Ver. 17. *Then took I the cup at the Lord’s hand,* etc.] In a visionary way, and did as he commanded, and prophesied as he directed him. The prophet was obedient to the heavenly vision, as became him:

and made all the nations to drink, unto whom, the Lord had sent me; not that he travelled through each of the nations with a cup in his hand, as an emblem of what wrath would come upon them, and they should drink deep of; but this was done in vision, and also in prophecy; the prophet publishing the will of God, denouncing his judgments upon the nations, and declaring to them what would befall them.

Ver. 18. *[To wit], Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah,* etc.] Which are mentioned first, because God’s judgments began with them, as they usually do with the house of God, (⁴⁰⁰⁷1 Peter 4:17); and even now began; for this very year, in which this prophecy was delivered, Nebuchadnezzar came up and besieged Jerusalem, and carried away some captives, (²⁰⁰⁰Daniel 1:1); this was the beginning of what afterwards were more fully executed:

and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof: the Kings Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, with those of their families, the princes of the blood, and their nobles:

to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; to strip them of their crowns and kingdom, of their wealth, and riches, and honour, and bring them into slavery and bondage; so that they became an astonishment to some, to see the change that was made in them; and were hissed stand cursed by others:

(*as [it is] this day*); which is added, either because of the certainty of it, or because it began to take, place this very year; though more fully in Jeconiah's time, and still more in Zedekiah's; or rather this clause might be added by Jeremiah after the captivity; or by Baruch, or by Ezra, or whoever collected his prophecies, and put them into one volume, as (²⁴⁵¹Jeremiah 52:1-34) seems to be added by another hand.

Ver. 19. *Pharaoh king of Egypt*, etc.] Who is mentioned first after the kings of Judah; not only because the Jews were in alliance with Egypt, and trusted to them; and therefore this is observed, to show the vanity of their confidence and dependence; but because the judgments of God first took place on the king of Egypt; for in this very year, in which this prophecy was delivered, Pharaohnecho king of Egypt was smitten by Nebuchadnezzar, (²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 46:2); though the prophecy had a further accomplishment in Pharaohhophra, who was given into the hands of his enemies, as foretold, (²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 44:30);

and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; his menial servants, his domestics, and his nobles and peers of the realm, and all his subjects. It expresses an utter destruction of the kingdom of Egypt; and the particulars of it may be the rather given, to show the vain trust of the Jews in that people.

Ver. 20. *And all the mingled people*, etc.] Not the Arabians, who are mentioned afterwards, (²⁴⁵²Jeremiah 25:24); but rather a mixed people in the land of Egypt, such as came out of it along with the Israelites; or were near it, and bordered upon it, as the Targum; which renders it, all the bordering kings; or rather a mixture of people of different nations that dwelt by the sea coasts, either the Mediterranean, or the Red sea, as others think:

and all the kings of the land of Uz; not the country of Job, called by the Greeks Ausitis, as the Vulgate Latin version; but rather a country of Idumea, so called from Uz the son of Dishan, the son of Seir, (²⁴⁴¹Lamentations 4:21 ⁰¹³³Genesis 36:28);

and all the kings of the land of the Philistines; the petty kings of it, called the lords of the Philistines elsewhere, who were great enemies to the people of the Jews: the prophecy of their destruction is in forty seventh chapter, and whose principal cities are next mentioned:

and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; of Ashkelon, and the sword in it, and ruin, (see ^(247B)Jeremiah 47:5,7). “Azzah” is the same with Gaza, whose destruction is also foretold in (^(247C)Jeremiah 47:1,5); (see ^(483B)Acts 8:26); “Ekron” was another of the cities of the Philistines; (see ⁽⁹⁵⁰⁾1 Samuel 5:10); and “Ashdod” is the same with Azotus, another of their cities, (⁽⁴⁸⁴⁾Acts 8:40); called “the remnant of Ashdod”, because the remains only of a once very strong and fortified place; but was so weakened and wasted by Psammiticus, king of Egypt, in a blockade of it, for the space of nine and twenty years^{f517}, before he took it, that when he had got in it, it was but as the carcass of a city, to what it was before^{f518}.

Ver. 21. *Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon.*] All well known and implacable enemies of Israel. The Edomites descended from Esau; and the Moabites and Ammonites from Moab and Ammon, the two sons of Lot by his daughters. Their destruction is prophesied of in the forty eighth and forty ninth chapters.

Ver. 22. *And all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon,* etc.] Two very ancient cities in Phoenicia, frequently mentioned together in Scripture, being near each other. Their ruin is foretold in (^(247D)Jeremiah 47:4);

and the kings of the isles which [are] beyond the sea; which some understand of Greece and Italy; others of Rhodes, Cyprus, and Crete, and other islands in the Mediterranean sea; the Cyclades, as Jerom: but the words may be rendered, “and the kings of the country by the seaside”; and may design those that dwell upon the coast of the Mediterranean sea.

Ver. 23. *Dedan, and Tema, and Buz,* etc.] These seem to be places in Edom or Idumea, of whose destruction Jeremiah prophesies in (^(247E)Jeremiah 49:7,8,20); or rather in Arabia and Mesopotamia. Jerom reckons them among the Ishmaelites and Saracens, The persons from whom they descended are mentioned in (⁽¹⁰²²⁾Genesis 22:21 25:8,15);

and all [that are] in the utmost corners; that is, either of the above countries, or of the whole earth: or “all that had their hair shorn”^{f519}; or the corners of their beards; which Jerom says is applicable to the Saracens.

Ver. 24. *And all the kings of Arabia*, etc.] Of Arabia Petraea;

and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert; the other Arabians or mixed people, that dwell in Arabia Deserta, as the Scenites, Nomades, Kedarenes, and others; and so the Targum,

“and all the kings of the Arabians, that dwell in tents in the desert.”

Of these, see the prophecy in (~~244B~~Jeremiah 49:28,29).

Ver. 25. *And all the kings of Zimri*, etc.] Of Arabia Felix, so called from Zimran, a son of Abraham by Keturah, (~~028D~~Genesis 25:2); the same whom Pliny^{f520} calls Zamerenes;

and all the kings of Elam; or Persia; who are prophesied against in (~~244B~~Jeremiah 49:34-39);

and all the kings of the Medes; who commonly go together with the Persians.

Ver. 26. *And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another*, etc.] That were on the north of Judea, the kings of Syria, and those that were near to the kingdom of Babylon, whether more remote from Judea, or nearer it and which joined one another in that part of the world;

and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; the whole Babylonian monarchy, called the whole world; as the Roman empire afterwards was, (~~400B~~Luke 2:1);

and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them; or the king of Babylon, as the Targum; and that Babylon is meant by “Sheshach” is certain from (~~254E~~Jeremiah 51:41); but why it is so called is not so easy to say. The Jewish writers make it to be the same with Babylon, by a change of the letters in the alphabet, put in such a situation, which they call “Athbash”, in which “shin” is put for “beth”, and “caph” for “lamed”; and so, instead of Babel or Babylon, you have “Sheshach”, which is thought to be used rather than Babylon, that Nebuchadnezzar, now besieging Jerusalem, might not be irritated: but others take it to be the name of an idol of the Babylonians, from whence the city was called, which is not improbable; for, as Hillerus^{f521} has observed, their god Bel and Sheshach signify the same thing. Bel is the same as Behal, “swift”; and “Sheshach” may be derived from the Arabic word <Arabic> which signifies “to move swiftly”^{f522}; and may both be names of the sun, worshipped by the Chaldeans, so called

from the swiftness of its motion. Now in Babylon stood the temple of Bel or Sheshach, and so might have its name from thence: and it may be further observed, what has been by others, that the Babylonians had a public festival, like the Saturnalia of the Romans, which held five days, and was called Sacchoea or Shace, as is supposed from their god Shach, to whom it was kept: to which may be added, that Mishael had the name of Meshach given him in Babylon; “Shach”, in the one, answering to “El” in the other; which signifies God, (~~2000~~ Daniel 1:7). Shach is used for a king or prince in the Persic language to this day. And now the king of Sheshach or Babylon must drink of the cup, or be punished last of all; who was the instrument of destroying most of the rest, yet should not go unpunished.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou shalt say unto them,* etc.] To the several nations before mentioned, prophesied against:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; the Lord of armies, above and below, the Sovereign of the whole universe; but in a special and peculiar manner the God of Israel:

drink ye, and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more; as is sometimes the case of drunken men; they drink till they are quite intoxicated; and become drunk, and then they spew up what they have drunk; and, attempting to walk, fall, and sometimes so as never to rise more; not only break their bones, but their necks, or fall into places where they are suffocated, or in one or other, where they lose their lives. So it is signified, that these nations should drink of the cup of God’s wrath and fury; or his judgments should come upon them in such a manner as that they should be obliged to part with all their riches, power, and authority; and should fall and sink into such a ruinous condition, as that they should never be able to the more to a prosperous one:

because of the sword that I will send among you; by which they should be destroyed. The Targum joins this with the preceding clause, thus,

“and ye shall not rise from before those that kill with the sword, whom I send among you.”

Ver. 28. *And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink,* etc.] To give credit to the prophecies of ruin and destruction delivered by the prophet, but say, these things shall not be:

then shalt thou say unto them, thus saith the Lord of hosts, ye shall certainly drink; or those judgments shall certainly be inflicted; there will be no possibility of escaping, whether they were believed or not; or how unwilling soever they were to believe the denunciations of them, or to have them come upon them; yet assuredly so it would be; for thus saith the Lord of hosts, who is omnipotent, and does what he pleases in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, over whom he has a despotic power and government,

Ver. 29. *For, lo, I begin to bring evil upon the city which is called by my name*, etc.] Jerusalem, the city of God, the holy city, where his name was called upon, and he was worshipped; on this he would first bring down his judgments; and indeed he had already begun to bring evil on it; for this very year Nebuchadnezzar came up to besiege it, and carried some away captives:

and should ye be utterly unpunished? or could they expect to go free from punishment, who had so grossly sinned, and were guilty of such abominable idolatries, and had been the means of drawing in the people of God into the same; and therefore, since the professing people of God, who had been drawn in by their examples, were punished, they could not, they ought not, to think of escaping. See the like argument in (~~423b~~ Luke 23:31 ~~4047~~ 1 Peter 4:17,18);

ye shall not be unpunished; or cleared, or acquitted, or go free; but made instances and examples of vindictive justice:

for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts; or I will call them that kill with the sword, as the Targum; who will obey the call, answer to it, and come forth and slay the inhabitants of the earth, and none shall escape.

Ver. 30. *Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them*, etc.] What follows, as well as declare all that is before spoken concerning the cup of fury all nations must drink of:

the Lord shall roar from on high: from, heaven, like a lion, in violent claps of thunder; or in such dreadful dispensations of his providence, as will be very amazing and terrifying:

and utter his voice from his holy habitation; from heaven, as before; and though it will be terrible, yet quite consistent with his holiness and justice:

he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; the temple at Jerusalem, where he had his residence; but now should be deserted by him, and feel the effects of his wrath in the destruction and desolation of it: or rather, since the address is made to the nations of the world, and not to the Jews, it may be rendered, “in” or “out of his habitation”^{f523}; and so designs heaven, as before; and all these expressions are intended to show both the certainty and terribleness of the dispensation;

he shall give a shout, as they that tread [the grapes], against all the inhabitants of the earth; or, “answer a shout”^{f524}; give the onset for battle against the inhabitants of the earth, as the general of an army; which is accompanied with a shout, like that which is made by workmen treading in the wine press, to encourage one another to go on the more cheerfully in their work.

Ver. 31. *A noise shall come up [even] to the ends of the earth*, etc.] Wars, and rumours of wars, everywhere, till the cup has gone round, and all nations have drank of it, and have felt the power of divine wrath for their sins:

for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations; will enter into a judicial process with them; will litigate the point with them, and try it openly; that it may be seen who is in the right, and who in the wrong:

he will plead with all flesh; or enter into judgment with them, as Kimchi; or reprove them in judgment, as Jarchi; he will be too many for them; he will carry his case, overcome them in judgment, and reprove and condemn them. Or the words may be rendered, “he will be judged by all flesh”^{f525}; he will submit it to the judgment of the whole world, if it is not a righteous thing in him to do what he is about to do, and will do; he will make it clear and manifest that he does nothing unjustly, but all according to the strict rules of justice and equity:

he will give them [that are] wicked to the sword, saith the Lord; to be destroyed by it, and none but them; and seeing they are such that deserve it, he is not to be charged with unrighteousness in so doing.

Ver. 32. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation*, etc.] Begin in one nation, and then go on to another; first in Judea, and then in Egypt; and so on, like a catching distemper, or like fire that first consumes one house, and then another; and thus shall the cup go round from nation to nation, before prophesied of: thus, beginning at

Judea, one nation after another was destroyed by the king of Babylon; then he and his monarchy were destroyed by the Medes and Persians; and then they by the Macedonians; and then the Greeks by the Romans;

and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth; or “from the sides of [it]”¹⁵²⁶; that is, “from the ends of [it]”; as the Targum, which paraphrases it,

“and many people shall come openly from the ends of the earth;”

this was first verified in the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar, compared to a whirlwind, (~~24113~~ Jeremiah 4:13); and then in the Medes and Persians under Cyrus; and after that in the Greeks under Alexander; the great and last of all in the Romans under Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 33. *And the slain of the Lord*, etc.] Slain by his permission, yea, by his orders, according to his will, in his wrath and sore displeasure, and to glorify his vindictive justice:

shall be at that day from [one] end of the earth even unto the [other] end of the earth; not that this should be at one and the same time; for there never was such a time, that there was such a general slaughter in the world, that the slain should reach from one end to the other; but that within the dispensation, in which the cup should go round to all nations, meant by “that day”, the slain of the Lord would be in all parts of the world; or that, according to his will, there would be a great slaughter everywhere, as the cup went round, or the sword was sent, first ravaging one country, and then another;

they shall not be lamented; having no pity from their enemies; and as for their friends, they will share the same rite with them; so that there will be none to mourn over them:

neither gathered; taken up from the field of battle where they fall; but, where they should fall, there they should lie; none gathering up their bodies or bones, in order for interment:

nor buried; in the sepulchres of their fathers, nor indeed in any place, or in any manner; as not in any grand and magnificent manner, so not so much as in a common way;

they shall be dung upon the ground; spread upon it, and lie above it, as dung, to manure the earth.

Ver. 34. *Howl, ye shepherds, and cry,* etc.] The Targum is,

“howl, ye kings, and cry;”

and the rulers and governors of the nations before threatened with destruction are meant; who are here called upon to lamentation and mourning for the ruin and loss of their kingdoms; though Calvin thinks that this is an apostrophe to the Jewish nation, and the rulers of it. It is no uncommon thing in Scripture to call kings and civil magistrates shepherds; (see ^{<220>}Jeremiah 23:1,2 ^{<3018>}Zechariah 10:3 11:3);

and wallow yourselves [in the ashes], ye principal of the flock; or “roll yourselves [in dust]”, as a token of mourning; as being in the utmost distress, and incapable of helping themselves, and redressing the grievances of their people; and therefore lie down and tumble about as in the greatest anxiety and trouble, the Targum is,

“cover your heads with ashes, ye mighty of the people;”

meaning those who were in the highest posts of honour and profit; the chief as to authority and power, riches and wealth;

for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; the time is come when they who were the fat of the flock, and were nourished up for slaughter, should be slain. The allusion to shepherds and sheep is still kept up; and such who should escape that, should be scattered up and down the world, as a flock of sheep is by the wolf, or any other beast of prey, when some are seized and devoured, and others dispersed; and this was not the case of the Jews only, but of other nations in their turn;

and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel; a vessel of worth and value, and so desirable; as vessels of glass, of gems, or of earth, as of Venice glass, of alabaster, of China; which when they fall and are broken, become useless, and are irreparable; signifying hereby, that their desirableness and excellency would not secure them from destruction, and that their ruin would be irretrievable.

Ver. 35. *And the shepherds shall have no way to flee,* etc.] Or, “and flight shall perish from the shepherds”^{f527}; though they may attempt it, they shall not be able to accomplish it; neither the dignity of their persons, the

greatness of their power, or the abundance of their riches, would make a way for them; their enemies being so numerous, powerful, and watchful:

nor the principal of the flock to escape; this was particularly verified in Zedekiah and his princes, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:4-6). The Targum is,

“and the house of fugitives shall perish from the kings, and deliverance from the mighty of the people.”

Ver. 36. *And a voice of the cry of the shepherds*, etc.] Or of the kings, as the Targum:

and an howling of the principal of the flock, [shall be heard]; of the mighty of the people, as the same; what is before called for is here represented as in fact, because of the certainty of it:

for the Lord hath spoiled their pastures: their kingdoms, provinces, cities, and towns; or their people, as the Targum, among whom they lived, and by whom they were supported; still keeping up the metaphor of the shepherd and flock. This the Lord is said to do because he suffered it to be done, yea, ordered it to be done, as a punishment for their sins.

Ver. 37. *And the peaceable habitations are cut down*, etc.] Or, “their peaceable ones”, as the Targum; the palaces and stately dwellings, in which they lived in great pomp and prosperity, in great peace, plenty, and safety, are destroyed by the enemy, and laid waste, and become desolate; yea, even those that lived peaceably and quietly, and neither were disturbed themselves, nor disturbed others, yet, as is usual in times of war, share the same fate with their neighbours, who have been more troublesome and molesting:

because of the fierce anger of the Lord; or “from before [it], from the face [of it]”; shall be destroyed by it, that being displayed; and using enemies as instruments in the destruction of them. Sin is the cause of God’s wrath and fierce anger, and his wrath and anger the cause of the destruction of men and their habitations, Whoever are the instruments.

Ver. 38. *He hath forsaken his covert as a lion*, etc.] Which some understand of God leaving Jerusalem, or the temple, where he dwelt; who, while he made it his residence, protected it; but when he forsook it, it became exposed to the enemy. Kimchi says it may be understood of the destruction of the first temple by Nebuchadnezzar; but he thinks it is most

correct to interpret it of the destruction of the second temple; that is, by the Romans, when it was left desolate by Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But it may be understood of Nebuchadnezzar leaving Babylon, his den, and ranging about like a lion for his prey; (see ²⁰⁰⁷Jeremiah 4:7 50:17). So the Targum,

“and a king has removed from his tower or fortress;”

and the land is desolate; the land of Judea, or whatsoever country he comes into with his army; that, or Egypt, or any other:

because of the fierceness of the oppressor; the tyrant Nebuchadnezzar; or “oppressing sword”^{f528}, as some supply it, it being feminine; and so the Targum,

“from before the sword of the enemy.”

Some render it, “because of the fierceness of the dove”; so the Vulgate Latin; and understand it of the Babylonians or Chaldeans; who, as the Romans had an eagle, they had the dove on their standards or ensigns; which they received from the Assyrians, when they succeeded them in their monarchy; and those from Semiramis their first queen, who had it, it is said, on her standard^{f529}; and was retained in honour of her, and in memory of her being nourished by a dove, and turned into one after her death, as commonly believed^{f530}; and who had her name, as is affirmed^{f531}, from the word *arymx*, “semira”, signifying, in the Chaldee language, the song or cooing of the dove; but fierceness ill agrees with the dove, which is a meek and harmless creature;

and because of his fierce anger; either of God, or of the king of Babylon his instrument, in destroying nations; not Judea only, but many others.