

# CHAPTER 49

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 49

This chapter contains prophecies concerning the judgments of God on several nations and kingdoms, chiefly bordering on the land of Israel; on the Ammonites, (<sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 49:1-6); on the Edomites, (<sup><2407></sup>Jeremiah 49:7-22); on the kingdom of Damascus, or the Syrians, (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 49:23-27); on the Kedarenes or Arabians, (<sup><2428></sup>Jeremiah 49:28-33); and on the Elamites or Persians, (<sup><2438></sup>Jeremiah 49:34-39).

**Ver. 1.** *Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “to the Ammonites”<sup>f909</sup>; or, “against” them<sup>f910</sup>; it will bear to be rendered either way, and all is true; for what is said by the Lord, as follows, is concerning them, their sins, and their punishment, and is directed to them, and is a threatening against them:

*hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir?* certainly he has, and who ought to possess the land; this is to be understood not of the ten tribes, sometimes called Israel, as distinct from the other two; for these had been long ago carried captive, and left no heirs of their tribes; but of all Israel, including the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who, though their brethren of the ten tribes were carried captive, and left no children to inherit, yet, being next in blood, were the lawful heirs of their lands and possessions:

*why [then] doth their king inherit Gad?* that part of the land of Israel which belonged to the tribe of Gad; this, when the ten tribes were carried captive by the king of Assyria, and the Gadites among the rest, was seized on by the Ammonites, with their king at the head of them, lying near unto them; who might also pretend relation, as being the children of Lot, the brother’s son of Abraham; or claim it, as having been their own formerly, and so were the lawful heirs of it, as they imagined; when it of right belonged to the children of Judah and Benjamin: or, “why doth Malcam inherit Gad?”<sup>f911</sup> the same with Milcom or Molech, the abomination of the Ammonites, the idol they worshipped, (<sup><1116></sup>1 Kings 11:5,7); so Jarchi interprets it. The Ammonites having got possession of the land, set up their idol in it, where temples were built for him, and altars erected, and

sacrifices offered to him, so that he might be said to inherit it; and which must be very offensive to, and highly resented by, the God of Israel:

*and his people dwelt in his cities*: the Ammonites dwelt in the cities belonging to the tribe of Gad, as if they were their own; who are called the people of Milcom, or Molech, just as the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh, from the idol they worshipped, (<sup>2486</sup>Jeremiah 48:46).

**Ver. 2.** *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”<sup>f912</sup>; as they did, in a very little time after this prophecy:

*that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites*; the metropolis of the Ammonites; it was their royal city in the times of David, (<sup>1100</sup>1 Kings 11:1 12:26); called by Polybius<sup>f913</sup> Rabbahamana; and by Ptolemy<sup>f914</sup> Philadelphia, which name it had from Ptolemy Philadelphus, who rebuilt it; this the Lord threatens with the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, or the noise of warriors, as the Targum; the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar, who, about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, subdued the Ammonites, as Josephus<sup>f915</sup> relates:

*and it shall be a desolate heap*; be utterly destroyed; its walls broken down, and houses demolished, and made a heap of rubbish: and

*her daughters shall be burnt with fire*: Rabbah was the mother city, and the other cities of the Ammonites were her daughters, which are threatened to be destroyed with fire by the enemy; or it may mean the villages round about Rabbah, it being usual in Scripture for villages to be called the daughters of cities; (see <sup>366</sup>Ezekiel 16:46); so the Targum here paraphrases it,

“the inhabitants of her villages shall be burnt with fire:”

*then shall Israel be heirs unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord*: that is, shall inherit their land again, which the Ammonites pretended to be the lawful heirs of; yea, not only possess their own land, but the land of Ammon too: this was fulfilled not immediately upon the destruction of Ammon, but in part upon the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, when they repossessed their own country; and partly in the times of the Maccabees, when they subdued the Ammonites,

“Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain.” (1 Maccabees 5:6)

and will more fully in the latter day, when the Jews shall be converted, and return to their own land, and the children of Ammon shall obey them, (<sup>23114</sup>Isaiah 11:14); so Kimchi interprets it; and other Jewish writers understand it of the days of the Messiah, as Abarbinel observes.

**Ver. 3.** *Howl, O Heshbon*, etc.] Which was a city of Moab, though it formerly belonged to the Amorites; (see <sup>2482</sup>Jeremiah 48:2 <sup>4023</sup>Numbers 21:26); it was upon the border of Ammon, and near to Ai, now destroyed; and therefore is called upon to howl and lament, because its destruction also was near at hand, and might be expected; hence Kimchi gathers, that the Ammonites were destroyed before the Moabites: but some have thought that Heshbon was a double city, divided by a river, which ran through it; and that that city which was on one side of the river belonged to Moab, and that on the other side to Ammon:

*for Ai is spoiled*; not that which was near Jericho in the land of Canaan, but a city in the land of Ammon, thought to be the Gaia of Ptolemy; this seems to be the first city in the country of Ammon that Nebuchadnezzar would lay waste:

*cry, ye daughters of Rabbah*; the royal city before mentioned; (see Gill on <sup>2482</sup>Jeremiah 49:2”); either the inhabitants of it, particularly the women, especially the younger women, who would be in the utmost distress on hearing the enemy was so near them, and what had befallen Ai; or the villages about Rabbah, as Kimchi interprets it; that is, as the Targum,

“the inhabitants of the villages of Rabbah:”

*gird ye with sackcloth*; as a token of calamity and mourning for it, as was usual:

*lament, and run to and fro by the hedges*; which Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand of the enclosures or fences of villages, like those of gardens, fields, and folds, in distinction from walls of cities, and fortified places; but rather it signifies the hedges in the fields, whither, being drove from their habitations, they would seek unto for shelter, and run about among them for safety, lamenting their unhappy case:

*for their king shall go into captivity*; be taken and carried captive; either their principal governor; or rather Milcom their god, since it follows:

*[and] his priests and his princes together*; both such as offered sacrifices to him, and attended on and supported his worship: the same is said of Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, (~~2480~~Jeremiah 48:7).

**Ver. 4.** *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys*, etc.] Of which there were many in the country of Ammon, fruitful and well watered, which were situated by the rivers of Arnon and Jabbok, the borders of this country, and in which was the plain of the vineyards; (see ~~47113~~Judges 11:13,33); and indeed the whole country was a vale. For, as Josephus<sup>f916</sup> says, the country both of the Moabites and Ammonites were in the valley of Syria, or Coelesyria; that is, hollow Syria, so called from its lying low, or in a valley; for this country lay between the mountains Libanus and Antilibanus, as Strabo<sup>f917</sup> says, and brought forth a large increase; in this they gloried, in the produce of these valleys, in the grass, corn, and vines, that grew upon them, and the flocks that fed there; but now should have no occasion to glory, all being swept away by the enemy:

*thy flowing valley*, or, “thy valley flows”<sup>f918</sup>; is overflowed with water, through abundance of rain, which destroyed the fruits of it, so Jarchi; or rather flowed with the blood of the slain, as Kimchi, Ben Melech, and Abarbinel; the enemy having entered it, and made so great a slaughter of men in it:

*O backsliding daughter?* the Targum is, O foolish kingdom; the whole kingdom of Ammon is meant, or the people of it; who, descending from righteous Lot, may be called backsliders; and, being also idolaters, have this character; for such revolt from the true God, to worship idols: it may be rendered, “refractory”, “rebellious”<sup>f919</sup>; as all such persons are:

*that trusteth in her treasures, [saying], who shall come unto me?* dwelling in valleys encompassed with mountains, and in fortified cities, and abounding in wealth and riches, whereby they were able to procure men and arms to defend themselves; thought they were safe from any enemy, and that none could come nigh them, and so dwelt at ease, and in great security.

**Ver. 5.** *Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord God of hosts*, etc.] The terrible army of the Chaldeans, which should strike them with a

panic; who thought themselves so secure in their fortresses, trusting in their riches:

*from all those that be about thee*; meaning either from the Chaldeans, and the neighbouring nations, that should join and surround the Ammonites on all sides; or from all the borders of Ammon round about, where they should come; they would be a “magormissabib”, “a fear all round”, (<sup>241B</sup>Jeremiah 20:3):

*and ye shall be driven out every man right forth*; driven out of their houses, and cities, and villages, and steer their course right forward, and never look behind to see what were become of their families and their friends; everyone having enough to do to provide for his own safety:

*and none shall gather up him that wandereth*; that is straggling about, and knows not which way to take, and whither to flee for safety; all will be so intent on their own safety, that they will not concern themselves for others, to take them under their care; to take those that are on foot upon their horses or carriages, whom they overtake; or into their houses, as they pass by.

**Ver. 6.** *And afterwards I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.*] Perhaps by Cyrus; for, in the times of Judas Maccabeus, the children of Ammon were again a large and mighty people,

“Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain.” (1 Maccabees 5:6)

Justin Martyr<sup>f920</sup> says, that in his time there was a large multitude of Ammonites; but Origen<sup>f921</sup>, who was later than he, observes, that not only the Idumeans, but the Ammonites and Moabites, were then called by the common name of Arabians; and these are now the present inhabitants of their country; and when these shall be converted in the latter day; (see <sup>241B</sup>Isaiah 60:6,7); who may be called by the name of the ancient inhabitants; then will this be more fully accomplished: for some refer this to the days of the Messiah, and to the conversion of some of these Heathen people, either in the first times of the Gospel, or in the latter day; (see Gill on “<sup>241D</sup>Jeremiah 49:2”). The Jews<sup>f922</sup> understand this as fulfilled in Ammonite proselytes to their religion.

**Ver. 7.** *Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts,* etc.] Or, “unto Edom”<sup>f923</sup>, thus saith the Lord; or, “against Edom”<sup>f924</sup>; all which is true, as observed on (<sup><2400></sup>Jeremiah 49:1); meaning the Idumeans, the posterity of Esau, who was called Edom. Kimchi thinks this respects time yet future, and points at the destruction of Rome, and the Romans, who with the Jews frequently go by the name of Edom; and Abarbinel is of the same mind. And Cocceius is of opinion that the Jews are meant, and their destruction, with whom the Idumeans were incorporated before the coming of Christ, and had Herod, an Idumean, king over them; but it is best to understand the prophecy properly and literally of the Idumeans themselves;

*[is] wisdom no more in Teman?* a city in Edom, which had its name from Teman, a grandson of Esau, (<sup><0131></sup>Genesis 36:11); whose descendants were called Temanites; one of which was Eliphaz, a friend of Job’s, (<sup><801></sup>Job 2:11); it was a principal city, famous for men of wisdom; such an one was the person just mentioned: perhaps the grand senate of the country, or the chief counsellors, dwelt here; where schemes were formed for the good of the country in times of war or peace; or schools were kept here for the instruction of persons in various arts and sciences; and which had continued to this time, but now would be no more. The Targum is,

“is there no more wisdom in the south?”

but Jarchi better interprets it of Edom, which lay south to the land of Israel;

*is counsel perished from the prudent?* it was so, even from those that were the most famous for being prudent and understanding men; they were now at their wits’ end, and knew not what course to take, nor what advice to give, in this their time of distress. The Targum renders it “from the children”; the sons of the Temanites, strangely degenerated from their ancestors;

*is their wisdom vanished?* or corrupted, as the Targum; or does it stink? according to the Rabbinical sense of the word; or infatuated, and become good for nothing? verily it was, it was useless, disregarded and despised.

**Ver. 8.** *Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan,* etc.] Another city in Idumea; though some take it to be a country in Arabia, bordering on Edom, and subdued by the Edomites: the inhabitants of this place are advised to “flee” for their lives, since the enemy was just upon them; and “turn back”, lest they should fall into his hands; and hide themselves in some deep caverns of the earth, in holes, and dens of rocks,

and such like places. It is a prophecy that they should flee from and turn their backs on their enemies, and betake themselves to some very secret places for safety;

*for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him*; which was determined concerning him, threatened to him, and was his just desert; even the utter destruction of the whole land:

*the time of his visitation*; the time fixed to visit him in a way of wrath and punishment being come,

**Ver. 9.** *If grape gatherers come to thee, would they not leave [some] gleaning grapes?* etc.] If gatherers of grapes, at the time of the vintage, should come into thy fields to gather the grapes, being ripe, would not they leave some for the poor to glean? certainly they would, and not take every cluster. The Targum renders it,

“if thy spoilers, as grape gatherers, should come to thee,” etc.

*if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough*; who break into houses by night, these will eat and drink as much as is sufficient, and carry off what serves their turn; but they seldom take away everything they find in a house; they leave some things behind them; but it is suggested that the Chaldeans should take away all from the Edomites, and leave them nothing; (see Obidiah 1:5,6).

**Ver. 10.** *But I have made Esau bare*, etc.] By the hand of the Chaldeans; stripped him of everything that is valuable; of his cities, castles, villages, people, wealth, and treasure:

*I have uncovered his secret places*; where either his substance was hid, or his people; these were made known to their enemies, who seized on both:

*and he shall not be able to hide himself*; even in his deep places, in the caves and dens of the earth, but his enemy shall find him out:

*his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours*; his children, as the Targum; and his brethren, the Ammonites and Moabites; and his neighbours, the Philistines; or as many as were with him, and belonged unto him:

*and he [is] not*: his kingdom is not; he is no more a people and nation, but all destroyed by the sword, or carried captive; or there should be none left

of his brethren, and neighbours, and friends, to say to him what follows: “leave thy fatherless children”, etc. So Kimchi and Ben Melech say this phrase is in connection with the (<sup>2441</sup>Jeremiah 49:11).

**Ver. 11.** *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve [them] alive*, etc.] Leave them with me; commit them to my care; I will provide for them; they shall have food and raiment, and want nothing to make them comfortable: to have such a friend or friends, promising such things to a man, when he is obliged to flee and leave his family, or is at the point of death, serves to make him easy; but there would be none left of the Edomites to say such kind words, or do such a friendly part. Some think they are the words of God, either spoken ironically or seriously; suggesting that they should have no children or widows to leave, all should be destroyed; or, if any left, they could not expect that he would take care of them, whom they had so provoked; or that such would be their miserable case, unless he had mercy on them, and took care of their fatherless children, there would be none to do it. Others think it respects a remnant of the Edomites that should be preserved, and be converted to Christ in Gospel times. The Targum takes them to be an address to the people of Israel, paraphrasing them thus:

“you, O house of Israel, your orphans shall not be left, I will sustain them, and your widows shall trust in my word:”

which last clause we render,

*let your widows trust in me*; which, could they be considered as the words of God, agree well with him, who is the Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows, (<sup>2485</sup>Psalm 68:5); and a great encouragement to persons, in such circumstances, to place their confidence in him; and it must be right so to do.

**Ver. 12.** *For thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This that follows shows that what goes before is not said by way of promise and comfort, but threatening:

*behold, they whose judgment [was] not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken*; meaning either some of the other nations, who had not dealt so ill with the Jews as the Edomites had, at least their sins were not so aggravated as theirs were; they being akin to the Jews, and having used them in a very injurious and scornful manner; or the Jews themselves, who, in comparison of them, had not deserved divine vengeance, signified by a cup, a portion of wrath, and punishment righteously allotted them, and which they had partook of, being carried captive into Babylon: for this is



not to be understood strictly of proper justice, but in a comparative sense; for otherwise it was but just and right that they should be treated in the manner they were; only they were not so guilty as these were;

*and [art] thou he [that] shalt altogether go unpunished?* if lesser sinners are not let go free, how should it be thought that greater ones should? and especially if judgment had begun at God's own people, the wicked Edomite, could not expect to escape;

*thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink [of it];* the cup of wrath and vengeance; or have the just punishment inflicted on them threatened them.

**Ver. 13.** *For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord,* etc.] This he did, because he could swear by no greater, and to show the certain and infallible accomplishment of the event, and the importance of it; and which was so extraordinary, that it was scarce thought credible, and therefore an oath is used to confirm it:

*that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse;* not Rome, as Abarbinel; nor Jerusalem, as Cocceius; nor Bozrah of Moab, (<sup><2483></sup>Jeremiah 48:24); but Bozrah of Idumea, (<sup><2611></sup>Isaiah 63:1); the royal city of Edom, as Kimchi; this should be utterly destroyed, and be spoken of contemptibly, and used proverbially, to express a curse; the Lord curse thee as Bozrah is cursed. It may be put for the whole country of Edom, of which it was the metropolis, since it follows,

*and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes;* either those in the neighbourhood of it, and belonging to it, it being the capital or mother city; or all the cities in the land of Edom; so general should be the desolation.

**Ver. 14.** *I have heard a rumour from the Lord,* etc.] “A hearing”<sup>f925</sup>; or a report concerning the destruction of Edom, made to him in a dream or vision, by the spirit of God, as a spirit of prophecy:

*and an ambassador is sent to the Heathen;* or a messenger; Jeremiah the prophet, as some; or an angel, as Kimchi suggests, sent to gather the nations to war against Bozrah; or a divine impulse, as others, with which the Chaldeans were impressed; which was as a voice to them,

*[saying], gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle;* get your forces together, and come against Bozrah or Edom, to

invade and subdue it; attack it in a military way, not doubting of victory; (see Obadiah 1:1).

**Ver. 15.** *For, lo, I will make thee small among the Heathen*, etc.] Or, “I have given thee”, or “made thee”<sup>f926</sup>; as if it respected what Edom was at first, a people few in number, and their country not large, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi, and after them Abarbinel: but it rather intends what Edom should be<sup>f927</sup>; and which was the reason of gathering the Chaldeans against them, to reduce their number, weaken their strength, and destroy their substance, and so make them a small, feeble, and contemptible people; as follows:

*[and] despised among men*: for the fewness of their men, the desolation of their country, the consumption of their wealth and riches, their poverty and meanness; (see Obidiah 1:2).

**Ver. 16.** *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, [and] the pride of thine heart*, etc.] Some render it, “thine idol”<sup>f928</sup>; (see <sup><1153></sup>1 Kings 15:13); which, being terrible to them, they thought it might be so to others, and protect them. In the place referred to the word “miphlezeth” is used, and comes from the same root with this, which signifies to be terrible and formidable, and cause to tremble, as the idols of the Gentiles were to their worshippers, and others. The Vulgate Latin version of the above place interprets it of Priapus, which was an idol set up in gardens to frighten birds and thieves from coming thither<sup>f929</sup>. So Kimchi observes, that some interpret it here of idolatrous worship or superstition; but it is to be understood either of the roughness and terribleness of their country, abounding with rocks and mountains, which made it inaccessible; or rather of that terror which they struck into their neighbouring nations, by their wealth and riches, their power and strength, their courage and valour, and skill in military affairs; and having such strong cities, fortresses, and fastnesses, natural and artificial, of which they were proud; and, on account of all which, fancied that none would dare to invade them; or, if they did, their attempts would be fruitless; and this deceived them, making them careless and secure:

*O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock*; the land of Idumea being very hilly and rocky. Jerom<sup>f930</sup> says, who lived near it, that all the southern part of Idumea, from Eleutheropolis to Petra and Hailah, had their habitations in caves cut out of rocks:

*that holdest the height of the hill*; that dwelt on the tops of hills and mountains, and in towers and fortified places built upon them, as Kimchi

and Ben Melech; who think respect is had particularly to Mount Seir. The Targum is,

“for thou art like to an eagle that dwells in the clefts of the rock,  
whose high habitation is inn strong place;”

hence it follows:

*though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord*; signifying, though they might think themselves as safe and as much out of the reach of men as an eagle’s nest, and were as high and as secure in their own imaginations; yet they should be come at by their enemies, be fetched out of their strong holds, and reduced to the lowest and most miserable state and condition; of which they might be assured, since the Lord had spoken it, who would do it by the hand of the Chaldeans. The allusion to the eagle is very pertinent to illustrate the self-exaltation and self-security of the Edomites; the eagle being a bird that flies higher than any other, as Kimchi on the place observes, even up to the clouds, and out of sight; hence Homer<sup>f931</sup> calls it the high flying eagle; and which builds its nest in high places, in the tops of rocks; so Aristotle<sup>f932</sup> says, they make their nests, not in plains, but in high places, especially in cragged rocks; and Pliny<sup>f933</sup> relates that they build their nests in rocks; and he also says<sup>f934</sup> of the vultures, who seem to be meant by the eagles in (<sup><128></sup> Matthew 24:28); that they build their nests in the highest rocks, and which no man can reach.

**Ver. 17.** *Also Edom shall be a desolation*, etc.] Not only Bozrah, its principal city, before spoken of, but the whole country of Idumea should be laid waste; its fortified cities destroyed; its riches plundered; and its inhabitants slain with the sword; or carried captive:

*everyone that goeth by it shall be astonished*; at the desolation made, so suddenly and so universally:

*and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof*; rejoice at them; clap their hands, and shake their heads, as the Targum; and hiss with their tongues, insulting and deriding them.

**Ver. 18.** *As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah*, etc.] Which was so sudden and general, that nothing was left, or any spared; so should it be with Edom:

*and the neighbour [cities] thereof, saith the Lord;* the cities that were in the plain, Admah and Zeboim:

*no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it;* that is, of the race of Edom; no Idumean should inhabit it; otherwise those who conquered it should, and doubtless did. There seems to be some allusion to the Dead sea, these cities became, to which Edom is compared, and so were quite uninhabitable.

**Ver. 19.** *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan,* etc.] The Targum rightly interprets it of a king and his army, paraphrasing the words thus,

“behold, a king with his army shall come up against them, as a lion comes up from the height of Jordan;”

not the king of Edom that should come up against Judea, or to defend himself against those that invaded him; but Nebuchadnezzar and his army that should come up against the Edomites from the land of Judea, where Jordan was, having first subdued that; or should come with that strength, fury, and fierceness, as a lion when forced out of its covert near the river Jordan, by the overflowing of its banks, and obliged to betake himself to higher grounds; who, being enraged, roars and tears in pieces all in his way. Monsieur Thevenot<sup>f935</sup> says, that Jordan is beset on both sides with little, thick, and pleasant woods; and Mr. Maundrell<sup>f936</sup> observes, that

“there is a first and outermost bank to the river, about a furlong, upon a level, before you come to the second bank, to which it may be supposed the river did, and still does, overflow; and the second bank is so beset with bushes and trees, such as tamarisk, willows, and oleanders, etc. that you can see no water till you have made your way through them. In this thicket anciently (and the same is reported of at this day) several sorts of wild beasts were wont to harbour themselves, whose being washed out of the covert, by the over flowings of the river, gave occasion to the allusion, (~~2499~~Jeremiah 49:19).”

So Jerom<sup>f937</sup> speaks of lions, in his time, taking up their abode by the river Jordan, near which were desert places, reeds, and sedges:

*against the habitation of the strong;* the land of Edom, a country well fortified, in which mighty men dwelt; particularly Mount Seir, where their

king was, and which was “the fold of the mighty”; either of the mighty shepherd, as it may be rendered<sup>f938</sup>; or of the strong place<sup>f939</sup>; but what is this to a lion?

*but I will make him suddenly run away from her*; that is, either the mighty shepherd, the king of Edom, from his fold, upon the approach of the lion, the king of Babylon; or else, as it may be rendered, “and I will cause him to run upon it<sup>f940</sup> suddenly”: that is, cause the king of Babylon to come speedily into the land of Edom, and seize upon it, overrun it, prevail over it, and be master of it, as Jarchi interprets it:

*and who [is] a chosen [man that] I may appoint over her?* a choice person in Nebuchadnezzar’s army, fit to be made a deputy governor over the land of Edom:

*for who [is] like me?* for wisdom and power; able to do whatever I please, and to furnish those with proper abilities to perform and accomplish whatever I give them in charge and commission to do:

*and who will appoint me the time?* set a time to dispute the matter with me, or engage in war against me?

*and who [is] that shepherd that will stand before me?* or king, as the Targum and Ben Melech; any king, prince, or potentate, who, both in Scripture and in other writings, are often called shepherds; the king of Edom is particularly pointed at, whose habitation or fold is before observed: alas! what could such a shepherd do? or how could he stand before the almighty God, or any lion he should send?

**Ver. 20.** *Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Edom,* etc.] The decree of the Lord; the purpose and resolution he had taken up in his heart against the Idumeans, which was wisely formed, and upon just and good grounds:

*and his purposes that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman;* a principal place in Edom, the inhabitants of which were famous for their wisdom, (<sup><2440></sup>Jeremiah 49:7); and therefore are here particularly mentioned; there being no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord, so as to frustrate his purposes and designs, which have always their effect, (<sup><1002></sup>Proverbs 19:21 21:30);

*surely the least of the flock shall draw them out*; not the Persians, the least of the sons of Japheth, as some Rabbins in Jarchi<sup>f941</sup>; nor the Israelites, as Kimchi, particularly Rachel's sons, or the posterity of Joseph and Benjamin; but the common soldiers, the weakest and most feeble in the Chaldean army: as princes are compared to shepherds, their people are like flocks; and now the least of these in the king of Babylon's army should be a match for the strongest of the Edomites; and should draw them out of their habitations, as dogs or wolves drag sheep out of the folds, and draw about dead carcasses, and devour them. The words are in the form of an oath, "if the least of the flock do not draw them out"; that is, as I live they shall; or I swear by myself they shall certainly do it; so the Targum,

"if they do not draw and kill the mighty of the people:"

*surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them*; or, "their folds"; the sheep shall be destroyed, and their folds shall be demolished; that is, the inhabitants of Edom shall be slain with the sword, and their cities, towns, and villages, shall be laid waste.

**Ver. 21.** *The earth is moved at the noise of their fall*, etc.] Of the Edomites; whose fall was from the height of greatness and glory to a very low condition indeed; and as things, the higher they are from whence they fall, the greater noise they make, so it was with the Edomites; perhaps there may be some allusion to the falling of rocks and hills, with which Edom, abounded: this may respect either the noise and shout of the conquerors, when they fell; or the cry of the Edomites, when taken and destroyed; or the report of their destruction, when it came into the world; which struck the inhabitants of the whole earth with terror and amazement, so that they trembled at it; an hyperbolical expression, as Kimchi observes:

*at the cry, the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea*, or, "sea of Suph", or "weeds"; where weeds and rushes grew in great abundance, from whence it had its name. This is the Arabian gulf, which washed the shores of Edom, and was called the Red sea from thence, Edom signifying red. The meaning is, that the cry of the slain, or of the conquerors at the slaughter of them, should be heard to the borders of the land, to the sea shore, and by those in ships there; who should carry the report of it to each of the parts of the world.

**Ver. 22.** *Behold, he shall come up, and fly as the eagle*, etc.] The Targum is,

“behold, as an eagle comes up and flies, so shall a king come up with his army;”

the king of Babylon with his army, compared to an eagle for his swiftness and voraciousness, as before to a lion for his strength and fierceness:

*and spread his wings over Bozrah*; besiege that city, invest it, and seize upon it; very fitly are the wings of an army expressed by the wings of this bird, denoting both their extent and force; the same is said concerning Moab, (<sup>2480</sup>Jeremiah 48:40);

*and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Moab be as the heart of a woman in her pangs*; when just ready to be delivered; not only weak and timorous, but full of anguish, and: quite dispirited; (see Gill on <sup>2481</sup>Jeremiah 48:41”).

**Ver. 23.** *Concerning Damascus*, etc.] Or, “unto Damascus”<sup>f942</sup>; or, “against Damascus”<sup>f943</sup>; that is, “thus saith the Lord”; which is to be repeated from the foregoing instances, (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 49:1,7). This is to be understood, not only of the city of Damascus, but of the whole kingdom of Syria, of which Damascus was the metropolis; (see <sup>2308</sup>Isaiah 7:8);

*Hamath is confounded, and Arpad*; two cities in Syria; the first is generally thought to be Antioch of Syria, sometimes called Epiphania; and the other the same with Arvad, inhabited by the Arvadim, or Aradians; (see <sup>12834</sup>2 Kings 18:34 <sup>2309</sup>Isaiah 10:9 <sup>2371</sup>Ezekiel 27:11); these, that is, the inhabitants of them, as the Targum, were covered with shame, thrown into the utmost confusion and consternation:

*for they have heard evil tidings*; of the Chaldean army invading the land of Syria, and of their coming against them; and perhaps of their taking of Damascus their capital city; all which must be bad news unto them, and give them great uneasiness:

*they are fainthearted*; or “melted”<sup>f944</sup>; their hearts melted like wax, and flowed like water; they had no heart nor spirit left in them, through fear of the enemy;

*[there is] sorrow in the sea, it cannot be quiet*: the Targum is,

“fear in the sea, carefulness hath taken hold on them, behold, as those that go down to the sea to rest, and cannot rest;”

or, as other copies, cannot flee. So Jarchi, and Kimchi interpret it, as if the note of similitude was wanting, and the sense this, that the inhabitants of the above places were either like the troubled sea itself, which cannot rest; or like persons in a storm at sea, who are in the utmost uneasiness and distress: or else it designs such that belonged to the kingdom of Syria, that dwelt in the isles of the sea; who were in great fright when they heard of the invasion of their country by the Chaldeans, particularly the Antaradians.

**Ver. 24.** *Damascus is waxed feeble*, etc.] Or, “is become remiss”<sup>f945</sup>; her hands hang down, not being able through fear and fright to lift them up against the enemy; that is, the inhabitants of Damascus, as the Targum:

*[and] turneth herself to flee*; instead of going out to meet the enemy, the inhabitants of this city meditated a flight, and turned their backs upon him in order to flee from him, and escape falling into his hands:

*and fear hath seized on [her]*: or, “she seized on fear”<sup>f946</sup>; instead of seizing on arms, and laying hold on them to defend herself with, she seized on that; or however that seized on her, and made her quite unfit to stand up in her own defence:

*anguish and sorrows have taken her as a woman in travail*; (see Gill on “<sup>-2442-</sup>Jeremiah 49:22”); A phrase often used to express the sudden and inevitable destruction of a people, and their distress and inability to help themselves.

**Ver. 25.** *How is the city of praise not left*, etc.] The city of Damascus, famous for its antiquity, its wealth and riches, strength and power; and with the Heathens for its devotion and superstition. So Julian<sup>f947</sup> the emperor calls it,

“the truly city of Jupiter; the eye of the whole east; Damascus the holy and the greatest;”

but more especially for its delightful and pleasant situation. Benjamin Tudelensis<sup>f948</sup> says it was, in his time,

“a very great and beautiful city, surrounded with a wall; and the country about it was full of gardens and orchards, fifteen miles’ walk on every side of it; and no city in the whole world appeared with such plenty of fruit as that did.”

Monsieur Thevenot<sup>f949</sup> relates, that



“the city of Damascus is in the middle of a spacious plain, surrounded with hills, but all distant from the town, almost out of sight; those on the north side are the nearest, on which side it hath a great many gardens, full of trees, and most fruit trees; these gardens take up the ground from the hill of the forty martyrs, even to the town; so that at a distance it seems to be a forest.”

Mr. Maundrell<sup>f950</sup> tells us, that the Turks relate this story of their prophet Mahomet, that,

“coming near Damascus, he took his station at a high precipice, in order to view it; and considering the ravishing beauty and delightfulness of it, he would not tempt his frailty by entering into it; but instantly departed with this reflection on it, that there was but one paradise designed for men, and for his part he was resolved not take his in this world;”

and, adds the same traveller,

“you have indeed from the precipice the most perfect prospect of Damascus; and certainly no place in the world can promise the beholder at a distance greater voluptuousness. It is situate in an even plain of so great extent, that you can but just discern the mountains that compass it on the farther side. In its length it extends near two miles, and is encompassed with gardens, extending no less, according to common estimation, than thirty miles round; which makes it look like a noble city in a vast wood.”

Strabo<sup>f951</sup> says of this city, that it is worthy of praise, and almost the most famous city of all near Persia. The sense of it either is, how is it that so famous a city was not spared by the enemy, that they did not leave it untouched, but destroyed and demolished it? or how is it that it was not fortified by the inhabitants of it; that a parapet was not built about the wall all around, to strengthen it, and keep out the enemy? This sense, as well as the former, is mentioned both by Jarchi and Kimchi, who direct to (Na 3:8), for the confirmation of this sense of the word:

*the city of my joy!* these are either the words of the prophet, who had a great regard to the city of Damascus as ancient, well built, and opulent city, and lamented its destruction; or rather of the king of it, as Jarchi; or of the inhabitants of it, who said this to one another as they fled; so Kimchi: but there is no necessity of rendering it “my joy”, only “joy”; for the “jod”

affixed may not be considered as a pronoun, but as a paragogic, or a Syriac termination, which is common; though some interpret this of the city of Jerusalem, and as spoken by the Lord, or by the prophet in his name, upbraiding the Syrians for their hatred to it, and disturbance they gave it; and which is now mentioned as one cause and reason of their ruin; (see Amos 1:3).

**Ver. 26.** *Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets*, etc.] Or “verily”<sup>f952</sup> so Jarchi interprets it as an oath; Jehovah swearing that so it should be; that her young men, her choice ones such who were the flower of the city, and on whom its future prosperity depended; these should fall by the sword of the Chaldeans in the streets of the city, when having entered, and taken it:

*and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord of hosts;* soldiers and officers, men of strength and valour in whom the inhabitants of Damascus trusted for their defence; these should be cut off by the sword of the enemy at the time of the siege, and taking of it.

**Ver. 27.** *And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus*, etc.] Signifying either that, a breach being made there the destruction of the city should begin, and be carried on until it was completed; or it may be understood literally, that first the houses built upon the wall should beset on fire by the Chaldeans, through the divine permission, and according to his order and wilt, and therefore ascribed to him, which should proceed further. Compare with this (<sup>4713</sup>2 Corinthians 11:32, 33);

*and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad;* not only the houses of the common people in general, but particularly the palaces of their king and his nobles; Benhadad being a name of one of the kings of Syria, (<sup>4120</sup>1 Kings 20:1); and which, according to Kimchi, was the name of the king of Syria at the time of the destruction of Damascus by Nebuchadnezzar. Some think that this was a common name of the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh and Ptolemy with the Egyptians. It signifies the son of Hadad, which was the name of their idol; from whence their kings might be called, as was usual with the Assyrians and Babylonians.

**Ver. 28.** *Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor*, etc.] A new prophecy concerning the Arabians; for Kedar was a son of Ishmael, (<sup>40253</sup>Genesis 25:13); whose posterity inhabited Arabia Petraea. Hazor was Petra itself, the metropolis of the country, whose king had several petty

kings and kingdoms under him; for this is not the Hazor in the land of Canaan destroyed by Joshua, which had been the head of several kingdoms; and where Jabin king of Canaan afterwards reigned, (<sup><6110></sup>Joshua 11:10) (<sup><7012></sup>Judges 4:2); though some think that some of those Hazorites in Joshua's time made their escape, and fled into these parts, and built a city, and called it after the name of the former:

*which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the Lord:* that is, "thus saith the Lord concerning", or "unto", or "against Kedar"<sup>f953</sup>, etc. as in (<sup><2440></sup>Jeremiah 49:1); which the king of Babylon "hath smitten"; the past for the future, common in prophetic language: or, "is about to smite"<sup>f954</sup>; would do it in a very little time; for the phrase, "thus saith the Lord", is not to be connected with what follows after, but with what goes before; though indeed the next words are the words of the Lord to the Chaldeans:

*arise ye, go up to Kedar;* in a hostile manner; invade that country, and possess it:

*and spoil the men of the east;* the Arabians, which lay east of Judea and Babylon: or, "the children of Kedem"<sup>f955</sup>; the same with Kedemah, another son of Ishmael, (<sup><0125></sup>Genesis 25:15); whose posterity dwelt still more to the east; so Kimchi; though the Targum renders it "the children of the east".

**Ver. 29.** *Their tents and their flocks shall they take away,* etc.] The Kedarenes were a people whose business chiefly lay in feeding flocks, and of which their substance consisted; and they mostly dwelt in tents, which they removed from place to place, for the sake of pasturage for their flocks; hence they were sometimes called Scenites, and sometimes Nomades; (see <sup><3015></sup>Psalms 120:5 <sup><2106></sup>Song of Solomon 1:5); but now both their habitations, such as they were, and their flocks too, wherein lay their riches, would be taken away from them:

*they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels;* their curtains made of skins of beasts, of which their tents were made; or with which they were covered to protect them from the inclemencies of the weather; and all the furniture of them, their household goods; their vessels for domestic use; and utensils for their calling and employment; and their camels, which were much used in those countries for travelling from place to place; on which they put their tents, curtains, and vessels, when they removed from one pasturage to another; these they,

not the Kedarenes, should take to themselves, and flee with them; but the Chaldeans should seize on them for themselves, as their booty and prey:

*and they shall cry unto them, fear [is] on every side*; or, “magormissabib”, “a fear all round”, (<sup>241B</sup>Jeremiah 20:3); this is the word the Chaldeans shall use, and with it frighten the Kedarenes out of their tents; or by the sound of their trumpets, the alarm of war, and by their shouts and cries, and the clashing of their arms, they shall put them in fear all around: or else the Kedarenes and Hazorites, when they shall see the Chaldean army approaching, shall say one to another, fear is on all sides of us; nothing but ruin and destruction attend us from every quarter.

**Ver. 30.** *Flee, get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the Lord*, etc.] The same is said to the inhabitants of Dedan, (see Gill on “<sup>244B</sup>Jeremiah 49:8”);

*for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you*: had determined upon their destruction, and had consulted and contrived ways and means to effect it; and therefore, since so powerful an enemy had such a design upon them, it was high time to flee, and get as far off as they could, and hide themselves in the caverns of the earth.

**Ver. 31.** *Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation*, etc.] Or, “to the nation [that is] at ease”<sup>1956</sup>; the people that live quietly and in peace; have no wars with their neighbours, nor any among themselves; which seems to be the better sense of the word, for these Kedarenes were not a very wealthy people: these words do not express the counsel and purpose of Nebuchadnezzar; or are an address of his to his army, commanding them to arise, and invade the country of Arabia; for they are the words of the Lord, and are addressed to him and his army to go up in a hostile manner against the Kedarenes, here described:

*that dwelleth without care, saith the Lord*; not without the care of their flocks, or without providing things necessary for themselves and families; they were not an indolent people, that lived an idle and inactive life; but they dwelt “confidently”, or “securely”<sup>1957</sup>, as it may be rendered; they had no thought nor care to defend themselves from an enemy; they had no fear of any, imagining that no one would think it worth while to give themselves any trouble to invade them; their meanness they supposed was a protection to them:

*which have neither gates nor bars*; to their cities, or to their houses, being in no fear of an enemy to come and plunder them:

*[which] dwell alone*; being in no alliance with other nations; nor dwelling together in cities, towns, and villages, at least the common people; the greater part of them being scattered up and down, a few in one place, and a few in another; they dwelt for the convenience of feeding their flocks.

**Ver. 32.** *And their camels shall be a booty*, etc.] To the Chaldean army, as before, (<sup>244D</sup>Jeremiah 49:29);

*and the multitude of their cattle a spoil; to the same*; the Kedarenes had large flocks of sheep, as well as a multitude of camels, on which they lived, and in which their substance lay; (see <sup>230B</sup>Isaiah 60:6,7 <sup>400B</sup>Job 1:3);

*and I will scatter into all winds them [that are] in the utmost corners*; them that were gone with their flocks to feed them in the uttermost parts of their land; who, on hearing of the Chaldean army being entered and ravaging their country, would leave their flocks, and flee and be dispersed in the several parts of the world: or, “them that are cut in the corner”<sup>f958</sup>; in the corners of their beard; that have their hair cut all around, as the Arabians had; (see Gill on “<sup>202B</sup>Jeremiah 9:26”);

*and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the Lord*; suggesting that Nebuchadnezzar should surround them with his army, and so dispose of his troops, by placing them some in one part, and some in another, that they should not be able to escape on any side. It denotes their utter destruction and desolation.

**Ver. 33.** *And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, [and] a desolation for ever*, etc.] The city of Hazor, as well as the kingdoms of it; the royal city, where their king and principal men dwelt; even this should be no more inhabited by men, but by dragons, and the wild beasts of the field, and so remain for ever, at least a long time; (see <sup>233D</sup>Isaiah 13:20-22);

*there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it*: signifying the utter desolation of it; (see Gill on “<sup>249B</sup>Jeremiah 49:18”).

**Ver. 34.** *The word of the Lord that came unto Jeremiah the prophet against Elam*, etc.] The Persians, as it is commonly understood, who descended from Elam the son of Shem, (<sup>0102</sup>Genesis 10:22); according to Josephus<sup>f959</sup>; but rather the country of Elymais is here designed; which,

though in the times of Cyrus, was added to, and made a part of, the Persian empire, yet was a country distinct both from Persia and Media; and as such is spoken of by Pliny<sup>f960</sup>; though as near unto Persia, and bordering on Media; according to Stephanus<sup>f961</sup>, the Elymaites were a country that belonged to the Assyrians; and so Strabo<sup>f962</sup> places the Elymaeans in Aturia or Assyria; and it seems very manifest that Elam served under Sennacherib, king of Assyria, when he besieged Jerusalem, (<sup><2216></sup>Isaiah 22:6); and afterwards fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and became subject to him, which is the calamity here threatened them; for certain it is, that, in Belshazzar's time, Shushan in Elam was the royal seat of the kings of Babylon, (<sup><2012></sup>Daniel 8:2); now this prophecy against Elam was delivered out

*in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah*; perhaps in the first year of his reign, ten or eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem; how long before it had its accomplishment is not certain:

*saying*: as follows:

**Ver. 35.** *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will break the bow of Elam*, etc.] The inhabitants of this country were famous for their skill in archery; (see Gill on "<sup><2216></sup>Isaiah 22:6"); this the Lord threatens to break, so that it, should be useless, and of no more service to them to defend themselves, or annoy others. Their strength, as the Targum; that in which their great strength and security lay; in which they put their trust and confidence, as follows:

*the chief of their might*; which may be interpreted, by way of apposition, of their bow, the chief instrument of their might and power; or may design their mighty men, the archers themselves, who should be destroyed, even Elam itself, and all the inhabitants of it; especially their warriors, who should be slain or carried captive.

**Ver. 36.** *And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven*, etc.] The Targum interprets it the four kingdoms; (see <sup><2012></sup>Daniel 7:2). Some think this had its accomplishment in the times of Alexander; or else after his death, in the times of his four successors; but rather in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, who should bring with him, in his army, people that dwelt in the several parts of the world, comparable to the winds for their swiftness and strength; whose blast would be so great as to

drive the Elamites to every part of the world, as every light thing is by the wind:

*and will scatter them towards all those winds*; those four winds, east, west, north, and south:

*and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come*; those that are driven out of it, forced to flee from it, or are taken captive, should come into the several nations of the world; so that there would not be any in which an Elamite was not.

**Ver. 37.** *For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies*, etc.] Frightened; thrown into the utmost consternation, so that they shall have no heart nor spirit to go out against them, and meet them, and defend themselves; but make all haste imaginable to flee from them, such a panic would seize them:

*and before them that seek their life*; a further description of their enemies; they being such, who, not content with their substance, sought to take away their lives; nothing less would satisfy them, being: cruel and blood thirsty ones:

*and I will bring evil upon them, [even] my fierce anger, saith the Lord*; and a greater evil than that cannot be; signifying that the destruction that should be made among them would be the effect of the wrath of God upon them for their sins:

*and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them*; that is, those that slay with the sword, as the Targum; these should go after those that fled, and destroy them, till the greater part of them were consumed; for all of them that were taken were not destroyed; or otherwise there would have been none to return from captivity, as is promised at the close of this prophecy.

**Ver. 38.** *And I will set my throne in Elam*, etc.] Either when Alexander subdued it, or Cyrus, or rather Nebuchadnezzar, whose palace probably was, as it is certain his successors was, in Shushan in Elam, as before observed from (<sup>-208E</sup>Daniel 8:2). This is called the Lord's throne, because he gave it to him; his conquest of Elam, and his dominion over it, were from him:

*and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the Lord;* so that there should be no more kings of Elam, and princes and nobles of their own, after this time; and because mention is made of the kings of Elam in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, (<sup>255</sup>Jeremiah 25:25); though that is observed in the first year of his reign, some have thought that it is best to understand it of Cyrus, the Lord's servant and anointed; and whose throne might well be called the throne of God, which he gave him, and set him on in an eminent manner, not only there, but elsewhere; (see <sup>400</sup>Ezra 1:2 <sup>380</sup>Isaiah 45:1); and when this country of Elam, or Elymais, became a part of the Persian empire, and never had any more kings to reign over it separately. Some of the Jewish Rabbins<sup>1963</sup>, as Kimchi observes, interpret the king and princes of Vashti of Haman and his sons; but very wrongly.

**Ver. 39.** *But it shall come to pass in the latter days,* etc.] Not in the times of Cyrus, when these people enjoyed their liberty, as the Jews and other nations did, freed by him from the Babylonian yoke; which cannot with propriety be called the latter days, being but seventy or eighty years at most after this prophecy; but in the times of the Messiah, often in prophecy called the latter days:

*[that] I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord:* which was accomplished in a spiritual sense, when some of these people, the Elamites, were converted to Christ, and delivered by him from the captivity of sin and Satan, and were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God; (see <sup>410</sup>Acts 2:9).