

CHAPTER 50

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 50

This and the following chapter contain a long prophecy concerning the destruction of Babylon; and which is expressed in such language, that it may be, and is to be, accommodated to the destruction of mystical Babylon; and several passages in the book of the Revelation are borrowed from hence; and it is intermixed with promises and prophecies of the deliverance of God's people from thence, and of the conversion of the Jews, and the restoration of them to their own which will be at that time; (see ^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:4,5,8,19,20,33,34). The destruction of Babylon in general is proclaimed and declared, and the manner and cause of it, (^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:1-13); then the enemies of Babylon are stirred up and animated to proceed against her, and execute the judgments of God upon her, (^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:14-30). Next follows the Lord's controversy with her, because of her pride and oppression of his people; and threatens her with the sword, drought, and utter destruction, (^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:31-40); and then a description is given of her enemies, that should be the instruments of her destruction, (^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:41-44); and the chapter is closed with observing, that this is all according to the counsel and purpose of God, (^{<280B>}Jeremiah 50:45,46).

Ver. 1. *The word that the Lord spake against Babylon*, etc.] Or "to", of "of Babylon"^{f964}; the city of Babylon, the metropolis of the Chaldean empire; sometimes it signifies the whole country, here the city only, as appears by what follows:

[and] against the land of the Chaldeans; whither the Jews were carried captive, for whose comfort this prophecy is delivered out; and which had subdued other nations, and was become an universal monarchy; these people are mentioned last, because the rest of the nations were to drink the cup of God's wrath at their hands, and then they were to drink it after them; (see ^{<280B>}Jeremiah 25:9,26); this is to be understood not only of Babylon and its empire, literally taken, but of mystical Babylon and its dependencies; of Rome, and its jurisdiction; of antichrist, and the antichristian states, the last enemies of the church and people of God, who

will be destroyed by the pouring out of the seven vials; (see ⁽⁶⁶⁵⁾ Revelation 15:1 16:19). This prophecy, which is called “the word that the Lord spake”, for it was from him, the thing was decreed and declared by him, came

by Jeremiah the prophet, to whom the king of Babylon had been very kind; but yet he must be, and was, faithful as a prophet, to deliver what he had from the Lord concerning the ruin of his empire.

Ver. 2. *Declare ye among the nations*, etc.] The taking of Babylon; a piece of news, in which the nations of the world had a concern, as well as the Jews, being brought under the Babylonish yoke, from which they would now be freed; and therefore such a declaration must be very acceptable and joyful to them. Some take these words to be the words of God to the prophet; others, the words of Jeremiah to the nations; the meaning is only, that such a declaration should be made, and such things done, as follow:

and publish, and set up a standard; publish, [and] conceal not; cause it to be heard far and near; and, that it may be heard, set up a sign or standard, to gather the people together to hear it; for this standard was not to be set up for the enlisting of men, or gathering them together, to go up and fight against Babylon, since it was now taken; but as a token of victory, and as expressive joy, on account of it; or rather for the reason given; (see ⁽⁶⁶⁶⁾ Isaiah 13:2);

say, Babylon is taken; this is the thing to be declared, published, and not concealed; but with an audible voice to be pronounced, and rung throughout the several nations of the earth. Thus, when the everlasting Gospel is preached to every nation on earth, and Christ is set up in it as an ensign and standard to the people; it shall be everywhere published, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”, (⁽⁶⁶⁷⁾ Revelation 14:6,8 18:1,2);

Bel is confounded; an idol of the Babylonians, thought by some to be the same with Baal by contraction; he is by the Septuagint called Belus, the name of one of their kings; who might be idolized after his death, as was usual among the Heathen lions: he is said to be “confounded”, because he must have been, could he have been sensible of the taking of Babylon, where his temple stood, and he was worshipped, since he was not able to protect it; or rather, because his worshippers were confounded, that gloried in him, and put their trust in him. So the Targum,

“they are confounded that worship Bel;”

(see Gill on “²³⁶¹Isaiah 46:1”).

Merodach is broken in pieces; another of their idols, which signifies a “pure lord”; some of their kings had this as one of their names, (²³⁰¹Isaiah 39:1 ⁴⁵²³Jeremiah 52:31). The Targum is,

“they are broken that worshipped Merodach;”

her idols are confounded, her images are broken to pieces; these were their lesser deities, as the other two were their greater ones; all should be destroyed along with it; as all the idols and images of the church of Rome will, when that is destroyed, (⁶¹⁰¹Revelation 9:20).

Ver. 3. *For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her*, etc.] The Medes and Persians, which under Cyrus were one nation; and which not only lay north of Judea, where this prophecy came, but of Babylon, against which they were to come; and might lay more north to it, before the enlargement of their dominions; and besides, Cyrus came through Assyria to Babylon, which lay north of it; (see ²³⁴²⁵Isaiah 41:25). Thus, as Rome Pagan was sacked and taken by the Goths and Vandals, that came out of the north; so Rome Papal, and the antichristian states, will be destroyed by the Christian princes of the north, or those who have embraced what the Papists call the northern heresy; tidings out of the north shall trouble antichrist, (²⁷¹⁴⁴Daniel 11:44);

which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; that is, in process of time; for this desolation was not made at once; it was begun by Cyrus, made greater by Darius, and completed by Seleucus Nicator;

they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast; or, “from man to beast”^{f965}; such as were not slain should either flee away or be carried captive; so that in time none should remain, either of man or beast; (see ²³¹³⁹Isaiah 13:19-22); and for the accomplishment of it on mystical Babylon (see ⁶⁶⁸¹²Revelation 18:2,21-23).

Ver. 4. *In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord*, etc.] When Babylon shall be taken and destroyed, then what follows shall be accomplished; which, as it respects the conversion of the Jews, shows that this prophecy is not to be restrained to literal Babylon:

the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together: upon the taking of Babylon, in a literal sense, by Cyrus, the children of

Israel, or the ten tribes, carried away by the Assyrians, did not return; only the children of Judah, or the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites, and a few of the other tribes, that might be mixed among them: but when mystical Babylon is fallen, then the whole body of the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, Israel and Judah; which is foretold in other prophecies, as here, which speak of their general conversion; (see ^{<3018>}Jeremiah 30:3,9 ^{<3576>}Ezekiel 37:16-25) (^{<3011>}Hosea 1:11);

going and weeping; which is another circumstance, which shows that this does not respect the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for that was attended with joy, and not with tears; (see ^{<1301>}Psalm 126:1,2); unless it is to be understood of weeping for joy, and of tears of joy, as Kimchi interprets it; but it is better to understand it of that godly sorrow and mourning for sin, which will appear in the Jews at the time of their conversion; particularly for their fathers' ill treatment of the Messiah, their unbelief and rejection of him, and their continued obstinacy and perverseness, and other sins; (see ^{<2310>}Jeremiah 31:9) (^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10);

they shall go and seem the Lord their God; even David their King, the true Messiah, who is Lord and God; to him they shall seek for peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life; and acknowledge him to be the Messiah, their Lord, and their God; embrace his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances; (see ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 30:9 ^{<3015>}Hosea 3:5). The Targum is,

“when they were carried captive, they went weeping; but when they return from the land of their captivity, they shall seek the worship of the Lord their God.”

Ver. 5. *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward*, etc.] Either to Jerusalem, near to which Mount Zion was; or to the land of Israel, so called, from a principal part of it: and this also is not to be understood of their return thither, upon the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, and the liberty he gave them; for they had no need to inquire their way thither, nor do we find any where that they did; for though there might be many among them born in the captivity, who knew not the way; yet there were others that did, and could direct and go before them, even such who had seen the former temple, (^{<1312>}Ezra 3:12); but this suits better with the Jews in the latter day, upon the fall of mystical Babylon, when they shall be converted and return to their own land, and shall ask their way thither; being under a strong impulse of mind, and being bent upon it, and having

full resolution to go thither: or else by Zion may be meant the church of God in Gospel times, as it often is; the way into which the converted Jews will ask, being determined to give up themselves to it, and become members of it; which way is not a religious education, mere morality, or a bare attendance on worship; but faith in Christ, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism;

[saying], come, and let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant [that] shall not be forgotten; and then may they be said to “join [themselves] to the Lord”, when, under a divine influence, they shall give up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him; when they shall lay hold on him, embrace him, and believe in him; when they shall follow him in his own ways, and cleave unto him with full purpose of heart; and also when they shall join themselves to his people, to the churches of Christ, and abide by his truths and ordinances; to all which they shall stir up and encourage one another; either laying hold on the covenant of grace, which is an everlasting one, and will never be forgotten by the Lord; he is ever mindful of it, and keeps it; which is done when men join themselves to the Lord, (²⁵⁶⁶ Isaiah 56:6); or making an agreement or covenant with one another, and the churches to which they join themselves, to walk together in all the ways, ordinances, and commandments of the Lord; which agreement or covenant ought to be perpetually observed, and never forgotten. Kimchi owns that this part of the verse belongs to the days of the Messiah. The Targum is,

“they shall come and be added unto the people of the Lord, and he shall make with them an everlasting covenant, which shall not cease.”

Ver. 6. *My people hath been lost sheep,* etc.] like lost sheep, without a shepherd, going astray the fold, wandering from place to place, having none to take care of them, guide and direct them, or to go in and out before them, and lead them into suitable pastures; so it was with the Jews in the Babylonish captivity, and so it is with them now, and yet the Lord’s people still in some sense; he has a design of grace concerning them, a store of mercy for them, and thoughts of peace towards them, which will take place in due time; and such is the case of all God’s elect in a state of nature, they are sheep, but lost sheep, and yet his people;

their shepherds have caused them to go astray; from God and his worship, from the true religion; so their civil and ecclesiastical governors, their

kings, princes, priests, and prophets, were the causes of leading them into errors, by their laws, doctrines, and examples; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of their kings; but the Targum seems to understand it of other kings, that carried them captive,

“kings carried them away, rulers spoiled them;”

so their priests and Rabbins now cause them to err from the true Messiah, his Gospel and ordinances, as their false Christs and false prophets have done in all ages since the times of Christ;

they have turned them away [on] the mountains; or, “to” them^{f966}; where idols were worshipped, as Jarchi; this was their case before and at the Babylonish captivity, though never since: or, “from the mountains”^{f967}; from the mountains of Israel, and the good pastures there; from the Gospel of Christ, and the ordinances of it;

they have gone from mountain to hill; from one religion to another, from duty to duty, seeking rest and happiness there, in the law of Moses, and traditions of the elders; or from kingdom to kingdom, wandering about from place to place, as they do to this day;

they have forgotten their resting place; either the land of Canaan, which was their rest, (^{f968}Deuteronomy 12:9); or rather God himself, the resting place of his people, (^{f969}Psalms 116:7); or the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and fulness, is the true rest of his people; and which is forgotten when men rest in themselves and their duties, and seek elsewhere than in Christ for peace and comfort.

Ver. 7. *All that found them have devoured them*, etc.] As lost and wandering sheep are liable to be found, and to be devoured, by every beast of prey, lions, wolves, and bears; so the Jews were found by their neighbours, their enemies, and especially by the Chaldeans, having forsaken God, and being forsaken by him; and which is their case now, and are often found and seized upon by their enemies, and made a prey of under one pretence or another:

and their adversaries said, we offend not; we are not guilty of any evil, in taking away their lives, or stripping them of their substance:

because they have sinned against the Lord; and therefore are justly punished in this way; and it is no other than what the Lord threatened them

with, and foretold by his prophets should come upon them: this they said, not that they feared the Lord, or had any regard to his honour and glory, but to excuse themselves, which would not do; for though they sinned against the Lord, they had not sinned against them, and they had no right to destroy them, and plunder them of their substance; and so it is now, many think it no crime to injure the Jews in their persons and property, because they have sinned against Christ, and rejected him as the Messiah, who is

the habitation of justice; the dwelling place of the saints, the city of refuge and strong tower, whither the righteous run and are safe:

even the Lord, the hope of their fathers; whom their fathers hoped for and expected, he being spoken and prophesied of by all the prophets that were from the beginning of the world, and therefore called the Hope of Israel, (^{244B}Jeremiah 14:8 17:13).

Ver. 8. *Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans*, etc.] This, in the literal sense, is a call to the Jews in Babylon, and in other parts of Chaldea, to go out from thence upon the proclamation of Cyrus; and especially to the chief of them, to animate the rest, and set them an example; such as Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Ezra, and others: and, in the mystical sense, is a call to the people of God in Rome, and the antichristian states, to come out from thence, a little before the destruction thereof, as in (^{680B}Revelation 18:4); which seems to refer to this passage:

and be as the he goats before the flocks; which walk stately and nimbly, cheerfully and readily, without fear and dread, boldly and confidently, and encourage others to follow them. The Targum is,

“as princes at the head of their people.”

Ver. 9. *For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon*, etc.] The work was of the Lord; it was he that would give a commission and a command to the enemies of Babylon; that would incline them, and stir them up, to come against her; that would direct their motions and guide them thither, so that it would assuredly be; wherefore it behooves the people of God to make haste out of it:

an assembly of great nations from the north country; the Medes and Persians, with their allies and auxiliaries which came with them from the

north; as also a collection of Christian nations from the north of Europe against antichrist:

and they shall set themselves in array against her; draw up their army in form of battle, or prepare and dispose their instruments of war for the siege of Babylon:

from thence shall she be taken; on the north side, from which quarter the enemy should come; or from the place where their army is drawn up in battle array; or suddenly, and at once: so Babylon was destroyed by Cyrus; and the destruction of Rome, or mystical Babylon, will be sudden and at an unawares, (~~618~~ Revelation 18:8);

their arrows [shall be] as of a mighty expert man; or “that bereaves”^{f968} women of their husbands, and parents of their children: the Medes and Persians were famous for archery, strong to draw the bow, and skilful to guide and direct the arrow. Strabo^{f969} says of Media major, that it sometimes furnished out thirteen thousand archers to the Elymaeans, or Persians, against the Susians and Babylonians;

none shall return in vain; not one of the arrows but shall do execution, kill a man: or “it”, or “he, which” or “who, shall not return in vain”^{f970}; the assembly of nations, or anyone of the archers or soldiers.

Ver. 10. *And Chaldea shall be a spoil*, etc.] The land of the Chaldeans, as the Targum, should become a spoil to the enemy, and be plundered of all its riches and treasures; not only Babylon principally, but the whole country it was the metropolis of:

all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord; for though spoilers are generally insatiable, yet so great should be the riches found in Babylon and in Chaldea, that they should have enough, and desire no more; (see ~~617~~ Revelation 18:17).

Ver. 11. *Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage*, etc.] This is addressed to the Chaldeans who destroyed Jerusalem and the land of Judea, once the heritage of the Lord; when they rejoiced at the destruction of God’s people, and insulted them in their miseries; and which is the cause and reason assigned of their ruin; for though they had a commission to destroy, yet they exceeded that, and especially by exulting at the ruin of that people, which showed great

inhumanity. So the Papists will rejoice at the slaying of the witnesses, but will be repaid in their own coin, (^{<66110>}Revelation 11:10 18:20);

because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass: which feeds all the day, and so grows fat. Some copies read, “as the heifer that treads out”^{f971} the corn; which, according to the law, was not to be muzzled, and so was continually feeding, and grew plump and sleek; and so these Chaldeans, having enriched themselves with the spoils of Judea and other nations, gave themselves up to ease and luxury; and it was at one of their festivals their city was taken, to which there may be some allusion:

and bellow as bulls: or, “neigh as horses”^{f972}; having got the victory, of which war horses are sensible; or it may denote their impetuous lust after women, whom they forced and ravished, when taken captives by them.

Ver. 12. *Your mother shall be sore confounded*, etc.] The monarchy of the Chaldeans; so the Targum and jarchi, your congregation; or rather their metropolis, their mother city, the city of Babylon; which would be confounded when taken, none of her sons being able to defend her: the same will be true of mystical Babylon, the mother of harlots, (^{<66175>}Revelation 17:5);

she that bare you shall be ashamed; which is the same as before, in different words:

behold, the hindermost of the nations [shall be] a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert; or, as the Vulgate Latin version, “she shall be the last among the nations”; she that was the head of them, signified by the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar’s image, shall now be the tail of them, and become like a dry land and desert, without inhabitants, having neither men nor cattle in it; (see ^{<25118>}Jeremiah 50:3); or, as Jarchi and Kimchi, their end, “the latter end”^{f973} of the kingdom of Babylon; or what should befall that people in their last days would be, that their land should become a wilderness, the habitants being slain, and none to till it; or Babylon is called the last of the nations, because her punishment, in order of time, was last, as Gussetius^{f974} thinks; (^{<25256>}Jeremiah 25:26).

Ver. 13. *Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited*, etc.] That is, Babylon; which the Targum expresses,

“because thou, Babylon, hast provoked the Lord;”

by their idolatry, luxury, ill usage of his people, and profanation of the vessels of the sanctuary; therefore it should be destroyed, and left without an inhabitant in it:

but it shall be wholly desolate; as it now is. Pausanias says^{f975}, in his time there was nothing but a wall remaining; and Jerom^{f976} says, he had it from a brother Elamite, or Persian, that Babylon was then a park or place for royal hunting, and that beasts of every kind were kept within its walls: of mystical Babylon, (see ^{<fr69>}Revelation 16:19 18:2);

everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues; any traveller that had seen it in its glory would now be astonished to see the desolation of it; and, by way of scorn and derision, hiss at the judgments of God upon it, and rejoice at them, and shake their head, as the Targum.

Ver. 14. *Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about*, etc.] This is directed to the Medes and Persians, to dispose of their army in proper places round about the city of Babylon, to besiege it; and to order their instruments of war, fit for that purpose, a convenient manner; since they might be sure of victory, the Lord being wroth with it, and having so severely threatened its ruin:

all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows; the Elamites, or Persians, as before observed, were well skilled in archery; and, as Xenophon^{f977} reports, Cyrus had in his army, when he came to Babylon, a great number of archers and slingers; and the archers are called upon to draw the bow, who were expert at it, and not spare their arrows, since they would everyone do execution, as in (^{<fr10>}Jeremiah 50:9); and the slingers to “cast [their stones] at her”^{f978}, for so may be rendered; and thus it is interpreted, by Jarchi and by Kimchi, of casting either arrows or stones:

for she hath sinned against the Lord; which brought the wrath of God upon her; and chiefly the ill treatment of his people was the sin against him he resented.

Ver. 15. *Shout against her round about*, etc.] As soldiers do when they make an assault upon a place, to encourage one another, and dismay the besieged; just as the Israelites did when they surrounded Jericho:

she hath given her hand; submitted to the conqueror, and sued for mercy. The Targum is,

“she is delivered into her hand;”

the hand of the Persians, by two princes of Babylon, who went off to Cyrus, and showed him how to take the city; or rather it was delivered by Zopyrus into the hands of Darius:

her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; not at the taking of it by Cyrus, but afterwards by Darius; for this respects the conclusion of its destruction, which was progressive and gradual:

for it [is] the vengeance of the Lord: which he decreed, threatened, and took, and that on account of his people, who had been ill treated here; so the Targum,

“for it is the vengeance of the people of the Lord:”

and her enemies are called upon to

take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her; that is, to execute the Lord’s vengeance, of which the Persians were the instruments; and who were to go according to the law of retaliation, which is a just one; to do to Babylon as she had done to Jerusalem, and other places, she had utterly destroyed. These words seem to be referred to, and much the same are used of mystical Babylon, (^{¶6816} Revelation 18:6).

Ver. 16. *Cut off the sower from in Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest*, etc.] Both sower and reaper: the walls of Babylon took in a large compass of land, where there were corn fields; and which, as Curtius^{¶979} observes, would yield a sufficiency to hold out a siege against an enemy; but being taken, the husbandman would not be spared, as used to be, but should be cut off, and so none to till the ground, or to reap what was upon it; and thus, in course, would be, desolate, as before threatened. The Targum understands this in a figurative sense,

“destroy the king out of Babylon, and take hold of the sword in the time of slaughter;”

and Cocceius interprets the sower of any doctor or bishop in mystical Babylon, and the reaper of such that gather the fruits, and exact obedience; (see ^{¶6814} Revelation 18:14,22);

for fear of the oppressing sword; of the Medes and Persians:

they shall turn everyone to his people, and they shall flee everyone to his own land; not those of other nations, as the Jews, who were detained captives there, as Kimchi thinks; for these were not in such fear of the Persians, nor did they flee because of them; but were let go by them, and sent into their own land honourably: but either such who, of other nations, were come to traffic at Babylon; or rather the auxiliaries of other nations, who were either hired or forced into the service of Babylon; these, finding the city taken, would make the best of their way into their own country.

Ver. 17. *Israel [is] a scattered sheep*, etc.] Or like a sheep that is frightened and drove from the fold, and is dispersed, and wanders about here and there; Israel includes all the twelve tribes:

the lions have driven [him] away; from his own land, and carried him captive, and scattered him among the nations; these lions are afterwards interpreted of the kings of Assyria and Babylon: so the Targum,

“kings have removed them;”

comparable to lions for their strength, fierceness, and voraciousness:

first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; eaten up his flesh; meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria, who carried captive the ten tribes, that never returned, and therefore said to be devoured:

and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones; or, “boned him”^{f980}; took out his bones, all his strength and substance; or took the flesh off of them, stripped him of all his wealth and riches, reduced him to his bones, made a mere skeleton of him: we, with Kimchi and Ben Melech, and others, read “broke his bones”; to get the very marrow out, that nothing may be left of him: he took Jerusalem, burnt the temple, and carried captive the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the strength of Israel; so, between the one and the other, all Israel were like a scattered sheep, dispersed among the nations. Nebuchadrezzar was the then reigning king in Babylon when this prophecy was delivered, and therefore called “this Nebuchadrezzar”.

Ver. 18. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Because of this cruel treatment of his people, whose God he was; and being the Lord of hosts, and able to avenge himself on their enemies, he threatens as follows:

behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land; not Nebuchadnezzar, but a successor of his, Belshazzar, who was slain the night Babylon was taken:

as I have punished the king of Assyria; not Shalmaneser, that carried the tribes captive; but a successor of his, Chynilidanus, the last king of Assyria; who was killed when Nineveh was taken, the metropolis of Assyria, and which was done before this prophecy was delivered. These two kings may figuratively design the Turk and Pope, who will both be destroyed at, or just before, the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their own land; which is prophesied of in (~~2809~~Jeremiah 50:19,20).

Ver. 19. *And I will bring Israel again to his habitation*, etc.] Or “fold”^{f981}, or place of pasturage; for the metaphor of sheep is still continued. Israel designs not the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the Levites, and a few of the other tribes mixed with them only, but all Israel, together with Judah, as appears from (~~2810~~Jeremiah 50:20); and so this prophecy had not its full accomplishment at the Jews’ return from the Babylonish captivity; but respects their future conversion, when all Israel shall be saved, and they will return to their own land. Kimchi says this refers to time yet to come; which he prefers to the other sense he mentions, of the return of the captivity of Babylon;

and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead; which, as they were all fruitful places, and had good pasturage, so they belonged to the ten tribes; which shows that it respects the return of them and the fulness of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, they shall then enjoy.

Ver. 20. *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord*, etc.] When mystical Babylon shall be destroyed, and the Jews will be converted and brought into their land, and be in possession of every temporal and spiritual mercy; it will then most clearly appear that they are the favourites of heaven, and all their sins are forgiven them, as follows:

the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and [there shall be] none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; not that they will be wholly free from sin; or there will be none in them; or none committed by them; or that their sins are no sins; or that God has no sight or knowledge of them; but that they will not be found upon them, so as to be charged on them in a judicial way; having been removed from them to Christ, and satisfaction

made for them by him; who has finished them, and made an end of them, so as that no condemnation or punishment can be inflicted on them for them; wherefore, should they be sought for by Satan, or by the law and justice of God, they will never be found, so as to be brought against them to their condemnation. The reason is,

for I will pardon them whom I reserve; the remnant, according to the election of grace, whom God has chosen in Christ, preserved in him, and reserved for himself, for his own glory, and for eternal happiness; these are pardoned freely for Christ's sake; and being pardoned, no sin is imputed to them; all is removed from them, as far as the east is from the west; covered out of the sight of God; hid from the eye of avenging justice; blotted out as a debt book, which is not legible, or as a cloud which is no more; cast by the Lord behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, and entirely forgotten; never remembered or seen more, but buried in everlasting oblivion and obscurity; (see ^{<5117>}Romans 11:27) (^{<0221>}Numbers 23:21).

Ver. 21. *Go up against the land of Merathaim*, etc.] Thought to be the country of the Mardi, which lay part of it in Assyria, and part of it in Armenia; expressed in the dual number, because one part of it lay on one side the Tigris, and the other on the other side. Cyrus, with his army of Medes and Persians, is here called upon; who, according to Herodotus, passed through Assyria to Babylon: and so it may be agreeably rendered, "go by the land of Merathaim"; or the country of the Mardi. Many interpreters take it for an appellative, and not the proper name of a country. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the land of rulers"; and the Targum,

"the land of the rebellious people;"

and so Kimchi^{f982}: and to the same sense Jarchi, the land

"that hath exasperated me, and provoked me to anger;"

meaning the land of the Chaldeans, which had ruled over others, rebelled against the Lord, and provoked him to wrath against it. The word, being in the dual number, may, in the mystical sense, respect the two antichrists, the eastern and western, that have ruled over the nations, and rebelled against God, and provoked him; the Turks and Papists, those two rebels, the beast and false prophet, (^{<6621>}Revelation 19:20); against whom the Christian princes will be bid to go up;

[even] against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod; the name of a place in Assyria; (see ⁴²²³Ezekiel 23:23); by which also Cyrus might go up to Babylon, so Jarchi; and the Targum takes it to be the name of a place: but Kimchi and others take it to be an appellative; and so it may be rendered, “the inhabitants of visitation”^{f983}; because the time was come to visit and punish them for their sins; and may particularly design the inhabitants of Babylon, the city to be visited for its iniquities; and especially mystical Babylon, which shall come up in remembrance before God, (⁶⁶⁹Revelation 16:19);

waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord; either after the destruction of the places before mentioned; or pursue after those that flee and make their escape from thence, and destroy them; or rather their posterity, the remnant of them, as the Targum:

and do according to all that I have commanded thee; either Cyrus, according to all the Lord commanded him by the Prophet Isaiah, as Jarchi; or the seven angels, that are to pour out the vials of wrath on antichrist; the kings of the earth, who are to fulfil the will of God upon the man of sin, (⁶⁶⁰Revelation 16:1 17:16).

Ver. 22. *A sound of battle [is] in the land*, etc.] In the land of the Chaldeans, as it is expressed in the Septuagint and Arabic versions; the noise of warriors, the clashing of arms, and sound of trumpets, both of the enemy entered into the land, and of the Chaldeans arming themselves in their own defence:

and of great destruction; in the same land; or in Babylon, as Abarbinel supplies it; this is the consequent of the former.

Ver. 23. *How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!* etc.] The Targum is,

“how is the king cut down and broken that moved the whole earth!”

The king of Babylon, or the kingdom of Babylon, which was like a hammer for its hardness and strength; and being an instrument, in the hand of God, of beating to pieces and destroying the kingdoms and nations around it; but is now destroyed itself. These are the words either of the prophet, or rather of the people of other nations, wondering how this destruction came about, and rejoicing at it;

how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! this explains who and what is meant by the hammer of the earth, and by its being cut asunder and broken; even the utter destruction of the city and kingdom of Babylon.

Ver. 24. *I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon,* etc.] Retorting to the stratagem that Cyrus used, in draining the river Euphrates, and marching his army up through it into the midst of the city of Babylon, and took it by surprise, while the inhabitants at night were feasting and revelling: this is said to be a snare laid by the Lord, because it was according to the counsel of his will, and through his directing and overruling providence:

and thou wast not aware; of what the enemy had done, of his march into the city, and taking of it; for, as Herodotus and Aristotle report, one part of the city was seized and taken before the other knew anything of it:

thou art found, and also caught; as wild beasts in a net, or birds in a snare. The Targum is,

“thy sins are sought, and are found, and also thou art taken:”

because thou hast striven against the Lord; as persons litigate a point with each other in courts of judicature, or as warriors strive against each other in battle; she sinned against the Lord, and offended him, not only by her idolatry and luxury, but by her oppression of his people, and profaning the vessels of his house; as Belshazzar did, the night Babylon was taken. The Targum is,

“for with the people of the Lord thou hast strove.”

Ver. 25. *The Lord hath opened his armoury,* etc.] Alluding to the manner of kings, who have some particular edifice built for an armoury; (see ~~2004~~ Song of Solomon 4:4); wherein are provided and laid up all sorts of armour, small and great, which are fetched out from thence, in time of need. This armoury is to be understood of Media and Persia, and other parts, from whence a mighty army, well accoutred, was brought by the powerful providence of God; and indeed the whole world is his armoury, from whence he can raise up instruments to do his will at pleasure; or, “his treasury”,^{f984}; so the Targum; and some think this is said with reference to the treasure of the Lord’s house the king of Babylon had seized upon, and now by way of retaliation the Lord would open his treasury to his ruin:

and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation; as a king, when he goes to war, opens his armoury, and takes out armour of every kind, both offensive and defensive, swords, spears, shields, etc. so the Lord would now bring the Medes and Persians, well armed, to be the instruments of his wrath and vengeance on Babylon: or, “the vessels of his indignation”^{f985}; having some view to the vessels of the sanctuary, as some think, the king of Babylon had taken away and profaned; these may well be applied to the vials of wrath poured out on the antichristian states by the angels, called forth out of the temple, (~~f681~~ Revelation 15:1,8 16:1);

for this [is] the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans; which he decreed and ordered to be done; and which, without his power and providence, could never have been done: compare with this (~~f688~~ Revelation 18:8).

Ver. 26. *Come against her from the utmost border*, etc.] Or, “from the end”^{f986}; from the end of the earth; from the Persian gulf, and the Caspian sea, on which the Persians and Medes bordered; from the most distant countries; for the Medes and Persians, who are here called unto, brought others along with them in their army from places still more remote; for this is not to be understood, with the Targum, of entering into Babylon on one “side”; or, with Jarchi, of beginning at one “end” of the city, that it might not be known, and be taken suddenly:

open her storehouses; where her gold, silver, jewels, and other precious things, lay: or, her barns or “granaries”^{f987}, as the Targum and Kimchi; where the fruits and increase of the earth were laid up; and may figuratively design her cities and fortified places, full of inhabitants, as well as of riches and stores of all kinds:

cast her up as heaps; as heaps of rubbish to make a causeway of, and then tread upon them to make it smooth: or, “as heaps”, or “sheaves”^{f988} of corn; tread upon them as oxen do, and thereby thresh them out; so Jarchi interprets it,

“thresh her as grains of wheat;”

and to this sense the Targum refers,

“consume her substance as they consume heaps of wheat;”

(see ~~f682~~ Revelation 18:12-14);

and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left; of the city of Babylon, its inhabitants, wealth, and riches; so complete should the destruction be, (^{468B}Revelation 18:8,21-23).

Ver. 27. *Slay all her bullocks*, etc.] Or, “all her mighty ones”, as the Targum and Vulgate Latin version; her princes and great men, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel; compared to bullocks for their strength, fatness, and fierceness; (see ^{492D}Psalms 22:12,13); this may well be applied to the slaughter of kings, captains, and mighty men, at the battle of Armageddon, (^{469B}Revelation 19:18);

let them go down to the slaughter; to the place slaughter, as oxen do, insensible, and whether they will or not:

woe unto them, for their day is come, the time of their visitation; the time of their destruction, of visiting or punishing them for their sins, appointed by the Lord, which they could not pass; and so a woeful and dreadful time to them.

Ver. 28. *The voice of them that flee and escape out the land of Babylon*, etc.] The Jews that were captives in Babylon, upon the taking of it, took that opportunity to flee out of it, and make their escape to their own land, which some of them might do before the proclamation of Cyrus; whose voice declaring to their brethren in Judea what God had done to Babylon, and rejoicing at it, was as if it was heard by the prophet in vision, or under a spirit of prophecy; this also is true of them who will be called out of mystical Babylon, and escape from thence, just before its destruction, (^{468B}Revelation 18:4);

to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple; the vengeance which God took on the Chaldeans for their ill usage of his people, and for plundering and burning his temple; this the Jews, when they came to their own land, declared to their brethren there with joy and pleasure; and a like joy will be expressed when God shall avenge his people on antichrist, for his blasphemy against him, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in it, (^{461B}Revelation 13:6 18:20 19:1,2).

Ver. 29. *Call together the archers against Babylon*, etc.] The Medes and Persians, who were well skilled in archery, especially the Elamites; (see ^{232B}Isaiah 22:6); hence Horace^{f989} makes mention of “Medi pharetra”; and Cyrus in Xenophon^{f990} says, that he had under his command sixty thousand men that wore targets and were archers; (see Gill on ^{250B}“Jeremiah 50:9”).

Some render it “many”, as the Targum; and the sense is, either gather many together against Babylon, a large army; or cause many to hear the vengeance against Babylon; publish this good news; so the word used by the Targum signifies; and this will be done by Gospel preachers, with respect to mystical Babylon, (^{664b}Revelation 14:6,8);

all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape; surround it on every side; besiege it so closely that none may be able to escape:

recompence her according to her work: according to all that she hath done, do unto her; which is the law of retaliation; (see Gill on “^{280b}Jeremiah 50:15”); and with it compare (^{663b}Revelation 18:6);

for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel; behaved haughtily and contemptuously towards the Lord and his people; burning the city and temple of Jerusalem; profaning the vessels of it, and ill treating the captive Jews; so the Targum,

“because she hath spoken ill against the people of the Lord, saying words which were not right before the Holy One of Israel;”

which may fitly be applied to antichrist the man of sin, sitting in the temple of God, showing himself as God; opening his mouth in blasphemy against him and his saints, (^{510b}2 Thessalonians 2:4 ^{663b}Revelation 13:5,6).

Ver. 30. *Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets*, etc.] Or “surely”^{f991}; it is the form of an oath, according to Jarchi Cyrus, when he took Babylon, ordered proclamation to be made that the inhabitants should keep within doors; and that whoever were found in the streets should be put to death^{f992}, as doubtless many were:

and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord; as Belshazzar and his guards were^{f993}; (see ^{270b}Daniel 5:30); compare with this (^{669b}Revelation 19:18).

Ver. 31. *Behold, I [am] against thee, [O thou] most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts*, etc.] Or, O “pride”, or O “man of pride”^{f994}; intolerably proud, superlatively so, as the kings of Babylon were, as Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar likewise, the present king; so the Targum interprets it of a king,

“behold, I send my fury against thee, O wicked king;”

and is applicable enough to the man of sin, that monster of pride, that exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, (^{<5114>}2 Thessalonians 2:4); and therefore it is no wonder that the Lord is against him, who resists all that are proud; and woe to him and them that he is against:

for the day is come, the time [that] I will visit thee; in a way of vindictive wrath and justice, for pride and other this; (see ^{<2817>}Jeremiah 50:27).

Ver. 32. *And the most proud shall stumble and fall*, etc.] Or “pride”, as before; “the man of pride”, who is so proud that he may be called pride itself. The Targum, as before, interprets it a wicked king; and Abarbinel understands it of Belshazzar particularly, who was slain the night that Babylon was taken. It may be understood of the whole kingdom and monarchy of Babylon, which was a superb state; but all its grandeur and glory were brought down and laid in the dust at once, as mystical Babylon will; when it will be said, “Babylon the great”, the proud and the haughty, is fallen, (^{<6812>}Revelation 18:2);

and none shall raise him up; the kingdom of Babylon shall not be restored train, nor the king of it have any successor, nor the city be rebuilt; compare with this (^{<6821>}Revelation 18:21);

and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him; in Babylon, the metropolis of the kingdom, and in all others round about it: it denotes the utter destruction of the whole monarchy. It may be applied to the burning of Rome with fire, and the ruin of its whole jurisdiction; for, when that is destroyed, the cities of the nations all around shall fall, which belong unto it; (see ^{<6818>}Revelation 18:8 16:19).

Ver. 33. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] This is a preface to another prophecy, detached from the former, respecting the redemption of the Lord’s people by the Messiah; and is used to excite the attention to it, as well as, to assure the truth of it:

the children of Israel and the children of Judah [were] oppressed together; which cannot be well understood of the ten tribes of Israel, and of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, or the whole body of the Jewish people; since these were not oppressed at one and the same time, nor by one and the same monarch and monarchy. The children of Israel, or the ten tribes, were carried captive by Shalmaneser the Assyrian monarch; and the children of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian monarch, a hundred

and fifty years after; to say that some of the ten tribes were mixed with the children of Judah, at the time when carried captive into Babylon, and so oppressed together with them, can hardly be thought to answer the import of the phrase, “the children of Israel”; which seems to design the body of that people. It is better therefore to understand it of the whole mystical Israel of God, as in their nature state oppressed by sin and Satan, being under their dominion; or as labouring under the oppressions and persecutions of antichrist; or else of the Jewish people in their present captivity, who will be redeemed from it, and converted, and all Israel shall be saved:

and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go; as the Assyrians and Chaldeans took and held fast literal Israel and Judah; so the elect of God, the Israel he has chosen for himself, are taken captive by sin and Satan, and are held by them, till they are snatched from them by powerful and efficacious grace; and as many of God’s Israel are taken and held captive under the antichristian yoke; and as the Jews to this day are in a state of exile and captivity, from which they cannot free themselves.

Ver. 34. *Their Redeemer [is] strong, the Lord of hosts [is] his name,* etc.] And seeing his name is the Lord of hosts or armies, and has all the armies of heaven and earth at his command; and especially since he is Jehovah, the everlasting and unchangeable I AM; he must be strong and mighty, yea, the Almighty, and so able to redeem his Israel, as the Messiah was, who is here intended; from sin, Satan, and the world; from the law, its curse and condemnation; from death and hell, and wrath to come; as well as to deliver his people from the Romish yoke, and to avenge them on all their enemies:

he shall thoroughly plead their cause; with God and man; he that is the Redeemer of men is their advocate with the Father; with whom he pleads on their behalf his blood, righteousness and sacrifice, for all blessings of grace and glory; and to all charges of law and justice, and their own hearts, and the condemnings of them; and he pleads their cause with men, and rights their wrongs, and avenges the injuries done them by antichrist and others, (^{4681D}Revelation 19:2);

that he may give rest to the land; not to the land of Judea only, but to the whole world; which will be at rest and in peace upon the destruction of mystical Babylon, and the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their

own land; as well as the Messiah will give spiritual rest to all the redeemed ones here, and eternal rest, which remains for the people of God, hereafter:

and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon; by the destruction of it and them; and rendering tribulation to them that trouble his people; and by punishing antichrist with the vials of his wrath, and with everlasting damnation, the smoke of whose torment shall ascend for ever and ever, (³⁰⁰⁶2 Thessalonians 1:6,7,9 ^{6641b}Revelation 14:11 16:9-11,21).

Ver. 35. *A sword [is] upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “shall be”^{f995} or, “O sword, [be thou] on the Chaldeans”^{f996}; that is, the sword of the Medes and Persians; those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; in the mystic sense, the Christian princes that shall draw the sword against the antichristian states:

and upon the inhabitants of Babylon; the metropolis of Chaldea; the common people in it, as distinguished from those of high rank and degree following:

and upon her princes; Belshazzar and his nobles, who were slain the night Babylon was taken:

and upon her wise [men]; prime ministers, politicians, and counsellors of state; neither high birth nor great wisdom can secure from the sword of the enemy, when it has a commission from God, as it had here.

Ver. 36. *A sword [is] upon the liars*, etc.] Some render it “bars”^{f997}, as the word sometimes signifies; and interpret it of great men, who are the strength and security of cities and commonwealths; but these are mentioned both before and after. The Targum renders it “diviners”; and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it^{f998}; of which there were many among the Chaldeans, who were a lying set of men, who imposed upon and deceived the people; these with their divinations and soothsayings could not save the land, nor themselves, from the devouring sword; nay, their sorceries and divinations were the cause of the ruin of it; (see ^{347b}Isaiah 47:9,12,13 ^{6182b}Revelation 18:23);

and they shall dote; or, that they may “become foolish”^{f999}; be infatuated, and act a mad part, and be at their wits’ end; not knowing what course to take for their own safety, and much less be able to give direction and advice to others:

a sword [is] upon her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed; the soldiers and their officers, the most valiant and courageous of them; these would be in the utmost fright and consternation at the approach of the enemy; especially when they perceived the city taken, and the carnage made of the king and his nobles.

Ver. 37. *A sword [is] upon their horses, and upon their chariots,* etc.] Upon the horsemen, and those that rode in chariots; upon the whole cavalry, which should fall into the enemies' hands, and be cut to pieces; (see ⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾Revelation 19:18);

and upon all the mingled people that [are] in the midst of her; those of other nations that sojourned in Babylon, or came thither for merchandise; the word having, as Kimchi observes, such a signification; or rather her auxiliaries, troops consisting of other people that were her allies, or in her pay and service:

and they shall become as women; timorous, faint hearted, quite dispirited, unable to act, or defend themselves:

a sword [is] upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed; or they that slay with the sword, as the Targum, the soldiers, shall seize upon her treasures, and plunder them: thus should she be exhausted of men and money, and become utterly desolate.

Ver. 38. *A drought [is] upon her waters, and they shall be dried up,* etc.] Either on the waters of the land of Chaldea in general, from whence should follow barrenness, and so a want of the necessaries of life; hence Kimchi interprets it of a consumption of riches, and all good things; or on the waters of Babylon, the river Euphrates, which ran through it; the channel of which was diverted by Cyrus, and drained and made so dry, that he marched his army up it into the city. Some say Babylon was taken three times, by this stratagem of turning the river Euphrates another way; first by Semiramis; and after Cyrus by Alexander: this may well be applied to the drying up of the river Euphrates, upon the pouring out of the sixth vial, and to the destruction of the antichristian states, signified by the many waters on which the great whore of Babylon or Rome sitteth, (⁽⁶¹²⁾Revelation 16:12 17:1,15);

for it [is] the land of graven images; much given to idolatry; had idols of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone, (⁽²¹⁰⁾Daniel 5:2 ⁽⁶¹⁰⁾Revelation 9:20);

and they are mad upon [their] idols; greatly affected, and much devoted to them; superstitiously mad upon them: or, “they gloried in them”; as the Targum, Vulgate Latin version, and others^{f1000}; they praised and extolled them as true deities; as Belshazzar and his nobles did the very night Babylon was taken, (²⁷⁸⁴Daniel 5:4); and this their idolatry was one cause of their ruin. The word^{f1001} for “idols” signifies “terrors”, or terrible things; because their worshippers stood in fear of them, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 39. *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell [there]*, etc.] Of these creatures (see Gill on “²³²¹Isaiah 13:21-22”);

and the owls shall dwell therein; so mystical Babylon when fallen shall become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, (⁶⁶⁸²Revelation 18:2);

and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; interpreters observe that this was gradually accomplished: it was taken by Cyrus, and made tributary to the Persians; the seat of the empire was removed from it; its walls were demolished by Darius; it was drained both of its inhabitants and its riches through Seleucus Nicator building the city Seleucia^{f1002} near it. In Adrian’s time there was nothing but an old wall left; and in Jerom’s time it was a park for the king of Persia to hunt in; (see Gill on “²⁸¹³Jeremiah 50:13”); and (see Gill on “²³³⁰Isaiah 13:20”);

Ver. 40. *As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour [cities] thereof, saith the Lord*, etc.] Admah and Zeboim:

[so] shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein; the same is said concerning Edom; (see Gill on “²⁴⁹⁸Jeremiah 49:18”).

Ver. 41. *Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation*, etc.] The Modes and Persians, whose country lay north of Babylon: (see Gill on “²⁸¹⁰Jeremiah 50:9”);

and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth; the kings of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, (²⁸²⁷Jeremiah 51:27); and of the Armenians and other nations that Cyrus had subdued and brought with him in his army against Babylon, as Xenophon^{f1003} relates. Ten kings shall be raised up against mystical Babylon, and hate her, and burn her with fire, (⁶⁹⁷²Revelation 17:12,16).

Ver. 42. *They shall hold the bow and the lance*, etc.] Or “spear”. The Targum interprets it, “shields”; as many in Cyrus’s army had^{f1004}; the one an offensive, the other a defensive weapon; or, if bow and lance, the one is used at a distance, the other when near. The Medes and Persians were well skilled in handling the bow, as once and again observed: this very properly describes the armour of the Persians; which were, as Herodotus^{f1005} says, large bows and short spears; and Xenophon^{f1006} observes, that, besides bows and arrows, they had two javelins or lances, one of which they cast, and the other they held and used in their hands, as they found necessary; and so Cyrus^{f1007}, in a speech of his, says that they had breast plates to cover their bodies, and lances or javelins which they could use by throwing or holding, as they pleased:

they [are] cruel, and will not show mercy: not even to infants, but dash them against the stones, (^{<B078>}Psalm 137:8,9); (see ^{<2317>}Isaiah 13:17,18); and (see Gill on “^{<2317>}Isaiah 13:17”) and (see Gill on “^{<2318>}Isaiah 13:18”); hence “horribilis Medus”, in Horace^{f1008}:

their voice shall roar like the sea; when there is a tempest on it. This does not design the shout of the soldiers, when beginning the onset in battle, or making an attack upon a city besieged; but the noise of their march, their foot, and horse, and chariots, and the clashing of their army; all which, by reason of their numbers, would be very clamorous and terrible:

and they shall ride upon horses; the Persians had a large cavalry, their country abounding in horses:

[everyone] put in array like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon; furnished with armour, and put in a proper disposition, all in rank and file, well accoutred, and full of spirit, prepared to engage in battle, with you, O ye inhabitants of Babylon.

Ver. 43. *The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them*, etc.] Belshazzar, as Kimchi; he had the report brought him of the invasion of his land by them; of their approach to Babylon, and design upon it; and of their number, character, and force:

and his hands waxed feeble; as they did when he saw the handwriting upon the wall, (^{<2186>}Daniel 5:6);

anguish took hold of him, [and] pangs as of a woman in travail; a sudden panic seized him, and he was quite dispirited at once, as a woman in

childbirth, when her pains come upon her, and there is no avoiding them; though when those who were with Gobrias and Gadates rushed in upon him, they found him standing up with his sword drawn^{f1009}, but unable to defend himself against such a posse as came in upon him.

Ver. 44. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan,* etc.] What is said of Nebuchadnezzar coming up against Edom is here said of Cyrus coming up against Babylon; for of a king it is to be understood; as the Targum,

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

(see ^{<2409>}Jeremiah 49:19);

unto the habitation of the strong; to Babylon; where dwelt the king, his nobles, and his mighty men:

but I will make them suddenly run away from her; as they did from her king Belshazzar, when Gobrias and Gadates entered the royal palace, and seized upon him^{f1010};

and who [is] a chosen [man, that] I may appoint over her? or, “a young man”^{f1011}? such an one Cyrus was, who, by divine appointment, became master and governor of Babylon:

and who will appoint me the time? to enter the lists with me, and litigate the point with me in a court of judicature, or contend with me in battle:

and who [is] that shepherd that will stand before me? or king? not Belshazzar, he could not stand before the Lord: so the Targum,

“there is no king that hath strength before me;”

that is, to withstand him, or hinder what he has appointed and ordered to be done; (see Gill on “^{<2409>}Jeremiah 49:19”).

Ver. 45. *Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Babylon,* etc.] The same is said in (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 49:20); only, instead of Edom, Babylon is here put, and in the next clause:

and his purposes that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; instead of the inhabitants of Teman, the land of the Chaldeans:

surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; the weakest and most feeble in the army of Cyrus should be more than a match for any in Babylon, and should draw them out, and devour them, as dogs and wolves the sheep out of the flock:

surely he shall make [their] habitation desolate with them; (see Gill on “²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 49:20”).

Ver. 46. *At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved*, etc.] It being so sudden and unexpected, and so very astonishing:

and the cry is heard among the nations; that Babylon is fallen; which, as applied to mystical Babylon, will be matter of joy to some, and of lamentation to others; (see ⁶⁶⁴⁸Revelation 14:8 18:2,9-19).