

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO JOEL 3

This chapter, which some make the fourth, contains a prophecy of God's judgments on all the antichristian nations at the time of the Jews' conversion, and the reasons of them, (²⁹⁰¹Joel 3:1-3); a threatening of Tyre and Zidon, by way of retaliation, for carrying the riches of the Jews into their temples, and selling their persons to the Greeks, (²⁹⁰⁴Joel 3:4-8); an alarm to prepare for the battle of Armageddon, or the destruction that shall be made in the valley of Jehoshaphat, (²⁹⁰⁹Joel 3:9-15); and after that an account of the happy state of the church of Christ, their safety and security, plenty, prosperity, and purity, to the end of the world, (²⁹¹⁶Joel 3:16-21).

Ver. 1. *For, behold, in those days, and at that time*, etc.] Which Kimchi refers to the times of the Messiah; and is true of the latter times of the Messiah, of his spiritual reign yet to come:

when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem: not from the Edomites, Tyrians, and Philistines, that had carried them captive in the times of Ahaz; nor from Babylon, where they had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; for nothing of what is after foretold followed upon the return of these captivities: but this designs the present captivity of the Jews, and the restoration of them to their own land; of which (see ²⁵⁰⁸Isaiah 52:8 ²⁸¹⁸Jeremiah 30:3,9,18-21).

Ver. 2. *I will also gather all nations*, etc.] Or cause or suffer them to be gathered together against his people; not the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, in the times of Jehoshaphat, as Aben Ezra; but either the Turks, prophesied of under the name of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel, (²⁵⁰¹Ezekiel 38:1-39:21); and a multitude of other nations with them, who shall be gathered together against the Jews, to regain the land of Judea from them, they will upon their conversion inhabit; or else all the antichristian kings and nations, which shall be gathered to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, (⁶¹⁶⁴Revelation 16:14);

and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat: Kimchi thinks this was some valley near to Jerusalem, in which Jehoshaphat built or

wrought some works, and so was called by his name: Joseph Ben Gorion ^{F69} speaks of a valley, called the valley of Jehoshaphat, which was near Jerusalem, to the further end of which one Zachariah, a good man, in the times of the Jewish wars, was rolled and died, being cast down from the top of a tower upon the wall east of Jerusalem; and which is confirmed by R. Abraham, as quoted by Lively; and the true Josephus says ^{F70}, that the valley into which this man was cast lay directly under Jerusalem; and Benjamin of Tudela ^{F71} makes mention of a valley of this name, which he says lies between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives; where Jerom ^{F72} places it by the name of Caelas; with whom Mr. Maundrell ^{F73} agrees, who says that this valley lies between Mount Moriah and Mount Olivet, and has its name from the sepulchre of Jehoshaphat: and, according to Lyra on the place, who is followed by Adrichomius ^{F74}, it is the same with the valley of Kidron, which was so situated; but, why that should be called the valley of Jehoshaphat, no reason is given. Aben Ezra and others are of opinion that this is the same with the valley of Berachah, where Jehoshaphat obtained a very great victory over many nations, (⁴⁰⁰2 Chronicles 20:1,26); but it does not appear to have been called by his name, and, besides, seems to be at a great distance from Jerusalem; though there may be an allusion to it, that as many nations were there collected together and destroyed, so shall it be in the latter day; and I am of opinion that no proper name of a place is here meant, as going by it in common, but is so called from the judgment of God here executed upon his and his people's enemies. So Jarchi calls it "the valley of judgments"; Jehoshaphat signifying "the judgment" of the Lord: Kimchi says it may be so called because of judgment, the Lord there pleading with the nations, and judging them: and in the Targum it is rendered,

"the valley of the division of judgment:"

and to me it designs no other than Armageddon, the seat of the battle of Almighty God, (⁶¹⁶Revelation 16:16); and which may signify the destruction of their troops; (see Gill on "⁶¹⁶Revelation 16:16");

and will plead with them there for my people, and [for] my heritage Israel; the people of the Jews, who will now be converted, who will have the "loammi", (³⁰⁰Hosea 1:9), taken off of them, and will be called the people of the living God again, and be reckoned by him as his portion and inheritance; though not them only, but all the saints; all that have separated from antichrist, his doctrine and worship, and have suffered by him:

whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land; Kimchi refers this to the scattering of the Jews by Titus and his army, and the partition of Judea among them, which is not amiss; in consequence of which they are still a scattered people, and their land has been parted between Turks and Papists^{F75}; sometimes inhabited by the one, and sometimes by the other, and now by both, on whom God will take vengeance; he will plead the cause of his people, by the severe judgments he will inflict on his and their enemies. This may respect the persecuting of the Christians from place to place, and seizing on their lands and estates, and parting them, as well as the dispersion of the Jews, and the partition of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 3. *And they have cast lots for my people,* etc.] Not only parted their land, but cast lots for their persons, Or played at dice for them, how many captives each soldier should have, and which should be their share and property: ninety seven thousand Jews, Josephus^{F76} says, were carried captive by the Romans, who, very probably, cast lots for them, as was usual in such cases; (see Na 3:10);

and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink; either they gave a boy to be prostituted to natural lusts, in lieu of a whore; and a girl to be debauched for a bottle of wine: or they gave a boy for the price of a whore, as the Targum and Kimchi interpret it; that is, they gave a boy, instead of money, to a whore, to lie with her, as the eunuch was given to Thais; and they gave a girl to the wine merchant for as much wine as they could drink at one sitting. These phrases both express their uncleanness and intemperance, and also the low price and value they set upon their captives; and is applicable enough to the Papists, notorious for the same abominable lusts.

Ver. 4. *Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine?* etc.] The Tyrians, Zidonians, and Philistines, were near neighbours of the Jews, and implacable enemies to them; and are here put for the enemies of the true church of Christ, the Papists and Turks, and in whose possession those places now are: these are addressed by the Lord, inquiring or demanding the reason of their ill usage of him and his people: “what have ye to do with me?” to be called by my name, or accounted my people? I know you not, nor will I have any fellowship with you: or what have ye to do with my people, to disturb and distress them? what wrong have I or they done you, that you thus use them?

will ye render me a recompence? for turning you out of your land, and putting my people into it? do you think to retaliate this?

and if ye recompense me; by doing an injury to my people:

swiftly [and] speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head; bring swift and sudden destruction upon you.

Ver. 5. *Because ye have taken my silver and my gold,* etc.] Which is all the Lord's, (³¹¹⁸Haggai 2:8); or which he had bestowed upon his people, and they had taken from them:

and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things; either the rich furniture of the houses of his people, which they carried into their own houses, or "palaces"^{F77}, as it may be rendered; having either taken them away themselves, or bought them of others that had taken them: or else the rich vessels of the temple; as these were carried away by the Chaldeans, and put into their idol temples, (²¹⁰²Daniel 1:2); so afterward they were taken by the Romans, and put into the temples of their gods: whether any of these came into the hands of the Tyrians, etc. by any means, and were put into their idol temples, as the temple of Hercules, is not certain; however, it is notorious that the Papists, the Tyrians are an emblem of, not only build stately temples, and dedicate them to angels and saints, but most profusely adorn them with gold and silver, and all goodly and desirable things; which is putting them to an idolatrous use they were not designed for.

Ver. 6. *The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem,* etc.] Not children in age literally, as Kimchi, kidnapped or bought by the Tyrians; but the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem:

have ye sold unto the Grecians; or sons of Javan; it was one part of the merchandise of Tyre to trade in the persons of men; and Javan, or the Greeks, with others, were their merchants for them, (³⁵⁷³Ezekiel 27:13); and the souls of men are a part of the trade of the merchants of Rome, typified by the Tyrians, (⁶⁸¹³Revelation 18:13);

that ye might remove them far from their border; from their own land, or place of dwelling, that so they might not be easily redeemed, and return to it any more. Rome, the antichristian Tyre, trading with the souls of men, is to their eternal damnation, as much as in them lies. Cocceius interprets this

of the children of the church being trained up in the doctrine of Aristotle, in the times of the schoolmen.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them*, etc.] That is, bring them back to their own land, from their places whither they have been carried captive, and where they have dwelt in obscurity, and as if theft had been buried in graves, but now should be raised up and restored; and this their restoration will be as life from the dead. So the Targum,

“behold, I will bring them publicly from the place whither ye have sold them;”

this is to be understood, not of the same persons, but of their posterity, they being the same natural body. Kimchi interprets it of them and their children; them at the resurrection of the dead, their children at the time of salvation. Some think this had its accomplishment in Alexander and his successors, by whom the Jews, who had been detained captives in other countries, were set free; particularly by Demetrius, as Josephus^{F78} relates: though it may be applied to the future restoration of the Jews, out of all countries, unto their own land; or rather to the gathering together the spiritual Israel, or people of God, who have been persecuted from place to place by their antichristian enemies;

and will return your recompence upon your own head; do to them as they have done to others; pay them in their own coin; retaliate the wrongs done to his people; (see ⁶³⁰Revelation 13:10 18:6).

Ver. 8. *And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah*, etc.] That is, deliver them into their hands, to dispose of them; this is thought to have been literally fulfilled in the Tyrians, when thirty thousand^{F79} of them were sold for slaves, upon the taking of their city by Alexander, who put some of them into the hands of the Jews, they being in friendship with him: it mystically designs the power that the Jewish church, converted, and in union with Gentile Christians, will have over the antichristian states:

and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off; the inhabitants of Sheba, a country by the Jews reckoned the uttermost parts of the earth; (see ⁴¹²Matthew 12:42). These are not the same with the Sabeans, the inhabitants of Arabia Deserts, that took away Job’s oxen and asses; but rather those who were the inhabitants of Arabia Felix, which lay at a

greater distance. So Strabo ^{F80} says, the Sabeans inhabited Arabia Felix; and Diodorus Siculus ^{F81} reckons the Sabeans as very populous, and one of the Arabian nations, who inhabited that Arabia which is called Felix, the metropolis of which is Saba; and he, as well as Strabo, observes, that this country produces many odoriferous plants, as cassia, cinnamon, frankincense, and calamus, or the sweet cane; hence incense is said to come “from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country”, (^{240B}Jeremiah 6:20); and since the Jews traded with these people for those spices, it is easy to conceive how they sold their captives to them: now these lived at a great distance, in the extreme parts of Arabia, both towards the Indian sea and the Arabian gulf. And Diodorus Siculus ^{F82} observes, that **δια τον εκτοπισμος**, because of the distance of their situation, they never came into the power or under the dominion of any, or were never subdued. These seem to be the descendants of Cush, the son, of Ham; and if they were the descendants of Joktan, the son of Shem, as some think, these are placed by Vitranga ^{F83} in Carmania; and where Pliny ^{F84} makes mention of a city called Sabe, and of the river Sabis; and it is worthy of notice that the ancient Greek fathers ^{F85}, with one consent, interpret the Sabeans of the Saracens: and whether they may not design the Turks, in whose possession this country now is, and into whose hands the antichristian powers may be delivered by means of the Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, may be considered;

for the Lord hath spoken [it]; and therefore it shall be accomplished. The Targum is,

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

whose counsels and decrees can never be frustrated. This, in an ancient book of the Jews called Mechilta, is referred to the prophecy of Noah concerning Canaan, whose sons inhabited Tyre, “a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren”, (⁰⁰²⁵Genesis 9:25), as Jarchi observes.

Ver. 9. *Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles*, etc.] This decree of God, concerning the deliverance of his church; and the destruction of their enemies; which is to be proclaimed among them, to the terror of them, and the comfort of God’s people, encouraging them to the battle, since they might be sure of victory; for the prophet here returns to give an account of the armies to be gathered together, and to be destroyed in the valley of Jehoshaphat, as appears from (^{241B2}Joel 3:12); and to this end heralds are here ordered to make proclamation of war throughout the nations, and to

gather them to the battle of Almighty God; whether seriously, or ironically, may be considered; what follows seems to be spoken in the latter way, to the enemies of the church; though they may be interpreted as spoken seriously to the people of God themselves:

prepare war; get all things ready for it, men and arms:

wake up the mighty men; generals, captains, and other officers, men of strength and courage; let them arouse from the sleep and lethargy in which they are, and get themselves in a readiness for war, and put themselves at the head of their troops:

let all the men of war draw near, let them come up; to the land of Judea, and to Jerusalem; that is, either the Christian powers with their armies, to defend Jerusalem against the Turks, and deliver it out of their hands; let them appear on the behalf of the Jews: or else let the enemies of Christ's church and people come up against them, even the most powerful of them; let them muster up all their forces, and do the most they can, they shall not prevail.

Ver. 10. *Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears*, etc.] Let not only soldiers, and such as have been trained up in military discipline, appear in the field on this occasion; but let husbandmen and vinedressers leave their fields and vineyards, and turn their instruments of husbandry and vinedressing into weapons of war; let them not plead want of armour, but convert these to such uses: on the contrary, when this battle will be over, swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks, (^{2111*} Isaiah 2:4);

let the weak say, I [am] strong; such as are weak, through sickness, or old age, let them not plead their weakness to excuse them from engaging in this war; but let them make the best of themselves, and say they are strong and healthy, and fit for it, and enter in it with all courage and bravery: this is said either ironically to the enemies of God's people, suggesting that all hands would be wanted, and should be employed, weak and strong, and all little enough; when they had made the utmost effort they could, it would be in vain: or else they are seriously spoken to the people of God, that none of them should excuse themselves, or be discouraged because of their weakness from engaging in this last and more battle; but take heart, and be of good courage, and quit themselves like men, and be strong, since they might be sure of victory beforehand. The Apostle Paul refers to this text in

(^{<47120>}2 Corinthians 12:10); and applies it to spiritual weakness and strength; and indeed the weakest believer, that is so in faith and] knowledge, may say he is strong, in comparison of what he once was, and others are; strong, not in himself, but in Christ, and the power of his might, and in the grace that is in him; nor should he excuse himself from fighting the Lord's battles, against sin, Satan, and the world, and false teachers; or from doing the Lord's work, any service he calls him to; or from bearing the cross he lays on him on account of his weakness; nor should he: be discouraged by it from those things; but let him strengthen himself, as Aben Ezra interprets it, take heart, and be of good courage.

Ver. 11. *Assemble yourselves*, etc.] From divers parts into one place: “be ye gathered”; or “gather yourselves together”, as the Targum and Kimchi; get together in a body, muster up all the forces you can collect together, Jarchi, from Menachem, by the change of a letter, renders it, “make ye haste”; lose time in preparing for this battle; get men, and arms for them, as fast as you can; be as expeditious as possible:

and come, all ye Heathen; antichristian nations, Mahometan or Papal; which latter, especially, are sometimes called Heathen and Gentiles, because of the Heathenish rites introduced into their worship, (^{<49106>}Psalm 10:16 ^{<66112>}Revelation 11:2);

and gather yourselves round about: from all parts, to the valley of Jehoshaphat or Armageddon, (^{<66164>}Revelation 16:14,16); this is spoken ironically to them, to use their utmost endeavours to get most powerful armies against the people of God, which would be of no avail, but issue in their own destruction; or it may signify what should be done by the providence of God, bringing such large numbers of them together to their own ruin:

thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord; which is a prayer of the prophet, or of the church, to God, that he would send down his mighty ones, the angels that excel in strength, and destroy this great army thus gathered together, as an angel in one night destroyed the army of Sennacherib. So Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it of angels, and many other interpreters; but perhaps it may be better to understand it of Christian princes and their forces, those armies clothed in white, and riding on white horses, in token of victory; with Christ at the head of them, (^{<66194>}Revelation 19:14); who may be said to be caused to “come down”; because, being

assembled shall go down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, where their enemies are gathered together, and discomfit them, The Targum is,

“there the Lord shall, break the strength of their strong ones.”

Ver. 12. *Let the Heathen be awakened, and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat*, etc.] That is, let the enemies of Christ and his church be aroused from that state of security in which they are, and prepare for their own defence; for in such a state the antichristian powers will be before their destruction; (see ^{<687>}Revelation 18:7); let them bestir themselves, and exert all the rigour and strength they have; let them come in high spirits against the people of God; let them invade the holy land, and come even to the valley of Jehoshaphat; and, when come thither, let them, descend into the place appointed for their ruin: the land of Judea being said to be higher than other countries, going to it is generally expressed by going up to it; otherwise it is more usual to say that men go down a valley than come up to it; and, mention being made again of this valley, shows that the same thing is referred to here as in (^{<281>}Joel 3:2); these words are said in answer to the petition in (^{<281>}Joel 3:11); for they are spoken by the Lord, as appears by what follows:

for there will I sit to judge all the Heathen round about; thither gathered together from all parts: the allusion is to a judge upon the bench, sitting to hear and try causes, and pass a definitive sentence; and here it signifies the execution of that sentence; such a pleading the cause of his people, as to take vengeance and inflict just punishment upon their enemies; (see ^{<300>}Psalm 9:4,5 ^{<644>}Revelation 14:14).

Ver. 13. *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe*, etc.] This is said to the mighty ones sent, the Christian princes, the executioners of God’s vengeance on antichrist; the angels that will pour out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian states, compared to reapers, with a sharp sickle in their hands, to cut them down, as grain is cut when reaped; as the same states are compared to a harvest ripe, the measure of their sins being filled up, and the time of their destruction appointed for them come; (see ^{<645>}Revelation 14:15);

come, get ye down; to the valley: or “go tread ye” ^{F86}; for another simile is made use of: the reference here is to the treading of clusters of grapes in the winepress, as appears by what follows: and so the Targum renders it,

“descend, tread their mighty men;”

in like manner Jarchi interprets it; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it: and Dr. Pocock observes, that the word <Arabic> in the Arabic language signifies to tread, as men tread grapes in a press: the reasons follow,

for the press is full; of clusters of the vine; or the valley is full of wicked men, compared unto them, destined to destruction:

the fats overflow; with the juice of grapes squeezed out, denoting the great effusion of blood that will be made; (see ^{<6148>}Revelation 14:18-20 19:15,18,20);

for their wickedness [is] great; is come to its height, reaches even to heaven, and calls aloud for vengeance; an end is come to it, and to the authors of it, (^{<6185>}Revelation 18:5). The Targum of the whole is,

“draw out the sword against them, for the time of their end is come; descend, tread their mighty men slain, as anything is trodden in a winepress; pour out their blood, for their wickedness is multiplied.”

Ver. 14. *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision*, etc.] The same with the valley of Jehoshaphat before mentioned; which shows that not any valley of that name is intended, but a certain place so called from the judgments of God in it; and here named “the valley of decision”, because here their judgment will be determined, as Kimchi and Jarchi; and at this time the controversy between God, and his people’s enemies, will be decided, and at an end: or “the valley of concision”, as the Vulgate Latin version; because in this place, and at this time, the nations gathered together in it will be cut to pieces: or, as others, “the valley of threshing” ^{F87}; because, as, in Jehoshaphat’s time, the Moabites and Ammonites were threshed by the Jews in the valley of Berachah, to which the allusion is; so at this time the antichristian kings and their armies will be threshed and beaten, and destroyed by the men of Judah, God’s professing people; (see ^{<3043>}Micah 4:13); these seem to be the words of the prophet, breaking out into this pathetic exclamation, upon a sight of the vast multitudes gathered together in this valley, and slain in it; and the doubling of the word serves to express the prodigious number of them: and this shows that this prophecy refers either to the vast army of the Turks, under the name of Gog, and the great slaughter that will be made of them; and that this valley may be the same with the valley of Hamongog, that is, the valley of the

multitude of Gog, where their multitude of slain shall be buried, (^{<3311>}Ezekiel 39:11); or to that vast carnage of the antichristian kings and their armies at Armageddon, (^{<6164>}Revelation 16:14,16 19:18-21); the Targum is,

“armies, armies, in the valley of the division of judgment:”

for the day of the Lord [is] near in the valley of decision; that is, the great and terrible day of the Lord, to take vengeance on all the antichristian powers, both eastern and western, is nigh at hand, which will be done in this valley.

Ver. 15. *The sun and moon shall be darkened*, etc.] Both the politic and ecclesiastic state of antichrist shall be ruined and destroyed; it shall “fare” with Rome Papal as it did with Rome Pagan, at the time of its dissolution; (see ^{<6162>}Revelation 6:12,13 16:8);

and the stars shall withdraw their shining; antichristian princes and nobles in the civil state, and the clergy of all ranks in the church state, shall lose their glory.

Ver. 16. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem*, etc.] Christ, the Lamb, shall now appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and utter his voice in his providence and judgments on the behalf of his church and people, signified by Zion and Jerusalem; and therefore said to roar, and utter his voice from thence; he will be heard far and near, and strike terror in the hearts of his enemies; (see ^{<2531>}Jeremiah 25:30,31);

and the heavens and the earth shall shake; great revolutions will be made in the world, both in church and state, among the antichristian powers; and such as will also make them shake and tremble, as well as alter the form and frame of things among them; (see ^{<6168>}Revelation 16:18,19); changes in government, civil and ecclesiastic, are sometimes signified by such phrases, (^{<3116>}Haggai 2:6,7 ^{<8126>}Hebrews 12:26,27 ^{<6164>}Revelation 6:14 11:13,19);

but the Lord [will be] the hope of his people; the object, author, ground, and foundation of their hope of salvation here and hereafter; in whom they may hope for and expect safety and security in the worst of times; since he will be their “refuge”, or their “harbour”^{F88} as it may be rendered; to whom they may have recourse, to shelter and screen them from the rage and wrath of their enemies, and where they will be safe, till the indignation of God be over and past; and while calamities and judgments are upon the

unchristian and ungodly world, they will have nothing to fear amidst these storms, being in a good harbour:

and the strength of the children of Israel; of the spiritual Israel; of all such who are Israelites indeed, the Lord's chosen, redeemed, and called people, both Jews and Gentiles; the author and giver of their spiritual strength, the strength of their lives and of their hearts, of their graces and of their salvation; by whom they are furnished with strength to do the duties of religion; to exercise grace; to wrestle with God in prayer; to withstand spiritual enemies; to bear afflictions patiently, and to persevere to the end: or he is their "fortress"^{F89}; their strong hold and place of defence, where they are safe from every enemy, free from all distresses, enjoy solid peace and comfort, and have plenty of provisions, (²³³⁶Isaiah 33:16).

Ver. 17. *So shall ye know that I [am] the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain*, etc.] The church of God, which is his dwelling place; and will appear more manifestly to be so at this time, when Christ the Lamb will stand on Mount Zion, with an 144,000, having his Father's name in their foreheads, (⁶⁶⁴⁰Revelation 14:1); and which presence of the Lord will be clearly discerned by his people; by the destruction of their enemies, and by his protection of them; by his being their hope and strength, their refuge and their fortress; they will experimentally know his divine inhabitation among them:

then shall Jerusalem be holy; or "holiness"^{F90}; not Jerusalem, literally taken, as Kimchi; though, it being now rebuilt, will be inhabited by holy persons, the converted Jews, and so all manner of holiness practised in it; but rather the whole church of God everywhere, consisting of holy persons, made so through the holiness of Christ imputed to them, and the sanctifying grace of his Spirit wrought in them; not that they will be perfectly holy in themselves, as the saints will in the New Jerusalem state, (⁶²¹²Revelation 21:2,27); but they will be greatly so; holiness will be predominant and universal among men; there will be more real saints, and fewer hypocrites will be in the churches; (see ²³⁰³Isaiah 4:3 ³⁸⁴⁰Zechariah 14:20,21);

and there shall no strangers pass through her any more; to hurt and annoy the church of God; for there shall be none in these times to molest, disturb, and hurt, in all the holy mountain of the Lord, (²³¹⁰Isaiah 11:9); or to pollute her with false doctrine, superstitious worship, or morality; or her communion shall not be interrupted and made uncomfortable, or she be

pestered with hypocrites and ungodly persons, strangers to God and godliness, to Christ, his Spirit, and the power of religion; (see ^{<281>}Isaiah 52:1 ^{<644>}Ezekiel 44:9).

Ver. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, etc.] When antichrist shall be destroyed; the Jews converted; the power of godliness revived, and the presence of God among his people enjoyed. Vitringa, in his Commentary on Isaiah, frequently applies this, and such like prophecies, to the times of the Maccabees; though, he owns, they were but an emblem of better times under the Gospel dispensation; nor does he deny the mystical and spiritual sense of them;

[that] the mountains shall drop down new wine; which, and the following expressions, are to be understood not in a strict literal sense, as Lactantius ^{F91} seems to have understood them; who says, that, in the Millennium, God will cause a rain of blessing to descend morning and evening; the earth shall bring forth all kind of fruit without the labour of man; honey shall drop from the rocks, and the fountains of milk and wine shall overflow: but hyperbolically, just as the land of Canaan is said to flow with milk and honey; not that it really did, but the phrase is used to denote the fertility of it, and the abundance of temporal blessings in it. The literal sense is this, that the mountains shall be covered with vines, on which they are often planted; these vines shall be full of large clusters of grape; and these grapes, being pressed, shall yield a large quantity of new wine; and so, by a metonymy, the mountains are said to drop it down ^{F92}, that is, abound with it, or produce an abundance of it: but the spiritual or mystical sense is, that the churches of Christ in those times, comparable to mountains, and so to hills in the next clause, for their exalted and visible glorious state in which they now will be; and for the rich gifts and graces of the Spirit within them; and for the pasture upon them, and the trees of righteousness that grow thereon; and also for their firmness and stability, their immovableness and perpetual duration; these shall abound with fresh and large discoveries of the love of God and Christ, which is better than wine, (^{<2100>}Song of Solomon 1:2,4); like wine, cheering and refreshing; like new wine, though old as to its original, yet new in the manifestations of it; and which are usually made in the church, and the ordinances of it, to the making glad the hearts of the Lord's people; also they shall abound with the blessings of grace, the fruits of love, such as pardon, peace, justification, etc. which, like wine, fill with joy, revive and comfort; and though they are ancient blessings, provided long ago, they are exhibited under the Gospel

dispensation in a new covenant way; and the application of them is made in the churches, in Zion, where the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore. This may also take in the Gospel, which brings the good news of these blessings, and so is very reviving and cheering; and, though ordained and preached of old, is newly revealed under the present dispensation; and will be more clearly in later times, when all the mountains or churches will abound with it, and even the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of it, (²¹⁰⁰Isaiah 11:9); likewise the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things, of wines on the lees well refined, made in the mountain of the Lord, for all his people may be included; and both in that, and in the ministry of the word, the Lord is sometimes pleased, as he may more abundantly hereafter, to give his saints some foretaste of that new wine, which Christ and they shall partake of in his Father's kingdom; (see ²¹⁰⁰Song of Solomon 7:9 ²³¹⁶Isaiah 25:6 55:1-3) (⁴¹⁰⁰Matthew 26:29);

and the hills shall flow with milk: that is, there shall be much pasturage upon them, and a great number of cattle feeding thereon, which shall yield large quantities of milk; and so, by the same figure as before, the hills may be said to flow with it ^{F93}. The spiritual meaning is, that the churches of Christ, comparable to hills, for the reasons before given, shall abound with the means of grace, with the sincere milk of the word; to which the Gospel is compared for its whiteness and purity, for every word of God is pure and purifying; for assuaging the wrath the law produces; it being easy of digestion, even to newborn babes; and its salutary nourishing virtue and efficacy; and of this there will be great abundance in the latter day; (see ²¹⁰⁰Song of Solomon 4:11) (⁴¹⁰⁰1 Peter 2:2,3);

and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters; that is, the channels in which the rivers run; these, in a time of drought, are sometimes empty, and the bottoms of them to be seen, but now full of water, and flow with it: grace is often in Scripture compared to "water" because of its refreshing, cleansing, and fructifying nature; and "rivers" denote, an abundance of it; and the "channels", through which it is conveyed to men, out of the fulness of Christ, are the ordinances; (see ³⁰¹²Zechariah 4:12); and the prophecy suggests, that these should not be dry and empty, but that large measures of grace shall be communicated by means of them to the souls of men, to their great comfort and edification, and for the supply of their wants; (see ⁴⁸²⁵Ezekiel 36:25 ⁴¹⁰⁰John 3:5 4:10,14 7:37-39);

and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord; not meaning baptism, as some; nor Christ, the fountain of grace, life, and salvation; but the Gospel, the word of the Lord, that fountain full of excellent truths and doctrines; of the blessings of grace; of exceeding great and precious promises; and of much spiritual peace, joy, and comfort: this is the law or doctrine of the Lord, that should come out of Zion, or the church, (^{<211B>}Isaiah 2:3); the living waters that shall come out of Jerusalem, (^{<344B>}Zechariah 14:8); and the same with the waters in Ezekiel's vision, that came from under the threshold of the house, (^{<240E>}Ezekiel 47:1); it seems to denote the small beginnings of the Gospel, and the great increase and overflow of it in the world, as it does in all the above passages: this is referred by the ancient Jews ^{F94} to the times of the Messiah;

and shall water the valley of Shittim; a plain or valley near Jordan, upon the borders of Moab, at the farther end of Canaan that way, (^{<063D>}Numbers 33:49 ^{<060E>}Joshua 3:1). Benjamin of Tudela ^{F95} says, that from the mount of Olives may be seen the plain and brook of Shittim, unto or near Mount Nebo, which was in the land of Moab. This valley or plain, as the Targum, was so called, either from the "shittah" tree, (^{<2419>}Isaiah 41:19); of which was the wood "shittim", so much used for various things in the tabernacle and temple, that grew there; and which Jerom on this place says was a kind of tree that grew in the wilderness, like a white thorn in colour and leaves, though not in size, for otherwise it was a very large tree, out of which the broadest planks might be cut, and its wood very strong, and of incredible, smoothness and beauty; and which grew not in cultivated places, nor in the Roman soil, but in the desert of Arabia; and therefore one would think did not grow in this plain near Jordan, and so could not be denominated from hence: but Dr. Shaw ^{F96} observes, that the Acacia is by much the largest and the most common tree of these deserts (that is, of Arabia), as it might likewise have been of the plains of Shittim, over against Jericho, from whence it took its name; and adds, we have some reason to conjecture that the shittim wood, whereof the various utensils, etc. of the tabernacle, etc. (^{<025D>}Exodus 25:10,13,23), etc. were made, was the wood of the acacia. Or it may be this place had its name from the rushes which grew on the banks of Jordan, near to which it was; for so, is the word interpreted by some ^{F97}: and Saadiah Gaon says, this valley is Jordan; so called, because Jordan was near to a place called Shittim: however, be it as it will, this can never be understood in a literal sense, that any fountain should arise out of the temple, and flow as far as beyond Jordan, and water any tract of land there;

but must be understood spiritually, of the same waters of the sanctuary as in Ezekiel's vision, (^{<3470>}Ezekiel 47:1,8); at most, the literal sense could only be, that the whole land should be well watered from one end to the other, and, become very fertile and fruitful, by the order and direction of the Lord, that dwells in his temple. The mystical sense is best. Jarchi makes mention of a Midrash, that interprets it of the expiation of the sins of the Israelites, in the affair of Baalpeor at Shittim, (^{<0251>}Numbers 25:1-3); but the true spiritual sense is, that the Gospel shall be carried to the further parts of the earth; that the whole world shall be filled and watered with it, and become fruitful, which before was like a desert; these living waters shall flow, both toward the former and the hinder seas, the eastern and west: era, as in (^{<3848>}Zechariah 14:8); (see ^{<2310>}Isaiah 11:9). Some render it, "shall water the valley of cedars"^{F98}; the shittim wood being a kind of cedar, of which many things belonging to the tabernacle, a type of the church, was made, being firm, sound, incorruptible, and durable; (see ^{<0250>}Exodus 25:10,23 26:26,32 27:1); saints are compared to cedars for their height in Christ, their strength in him, and in his grace; their large and spreading leaves, branches, and roots, or growth in grace; and for their duration and incorruption; (see ^{<0415>}Numbers 24:5,6 ^{<3923>}Psalm 92:13); a valley may signify the low estate of God's people; or be an emblem of lowly, meek, and humble souls, to whom the Gospel is preached, and who are watered and revived by it, and to whom more grace is given; see (^{<2304>}Isaiah 40:4 61:1 57:15). It is by Symmachus rendered "the valley of thorns"; and so Quinquevostus^{F99} says the word signifies and designs such who are barren in good works.

Ver. 19. *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness,* etc.] These two nations having been the implacable enemies of Israel, are here put for the future adversaries of the church of Christ, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; who will all be destroyed as such, and be no more: Rome is called, spiritually or mystically, Egypt, (^{<6108>}Revelation 11:8); and Edom is a name that well agrees with it, it signifying "red", as it is with the blood of the saints: and it is common, with the Jewish writers, by Edom to understand Rome; which though it may not be true of all places they so interpret, yet is of many, and so here. Kimchi, by Egypt understands the Ishmaelites, or the Turks; and, by Edom, Rome;

for the violence [of] the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land; either in the land of Judah; or rather in their own land, Egypt and Edom. This respects the violences and outrages

committed by the antichristian states upon the true professors of the Christian religion, the Waldenses and Albigenses, and others, whose innocent blood, in great quantities, has been spilled by them. Antichrist is represented as, drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and in whom will be found the blood of all the prophets and saints; and for this reason ruin and destruction will come upon him and his followers, and blood will be given them to drink, for they are worthy, (⁴⁷⁶Revelation 17:6 18:24 16:6,7).

Ver. 20. *But Judah shall dwell for ever*, etc.] The converted Jews shall dwell in their own land for ever, to the end of the, world and never more be carried captive, (³⁷²⁵Ezekiel 37:25); and the true professing people of God, as Judah signifies, shall continue in a church state, evermore, and never more be disturbed by any enemies, they shall dwell safely and peaceably to the end of time:

and Jerusalem from generation to generation; shall dwell so in like manner, age after age; that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or the members of the true church of Christ, who shall see and enjoy peace and prosperity, both temporal and spiritual, as Jerusalem signifies.

Ver. 21. *For I will cleanse their blood [which] I have not cleansed*, etc.] Which some understand, as the Targum, of the Lord's, inflicting further punishments on the, enemies of his people, for shedding their innocent blood; and that he will not expiate their sins, nor hold them guiltless, or suffer them to go unpunished; but rather this is to be interpreted in a way of grace and mercy, as a benefit bestowed on Judah and Jerusalem, who are the immediate antecedents to the relative here; and in the words a reason is given why they should dwell safely and peaceably for ever, because the Lord will justify them from their sins; forgive their iniquities; cleanse them from all their pollution, signified by blood; of which grace they will have had no application made to them till this time; but now all their guilt and faith will be removed; and particularly God will forgive, and declare to be forgiven their sin of crucifying Christ; whose blood they had imprecated upon themselves and their children, and which has remained on them; but now will be removed, with all the sad effects of it. Though this may also refer to the conversion of the Gentiles, and the pardon of their sins, and the sanctification of their persons, in such places and parts of the world, where such blessings of grace have not been bestowed in times past for many ages, if ever;

for the Lord dwelleth in Zion; and therefore will diffuse his grace, and spread the blessings of it all around: or “even the Lord [that] dwelleth in Zion”^{F100}; he will do what is before promised; being the Lord, he can do it; and dwelling in Zion his church, it may be believed he will do it; and this will be for ever, when his Shechinah shall return thither in the days of the Messiah, as Kimchi observes.

FOOTNOTES

- ft1 -- Onomast. Sacr. p. 856.
- ft2 -- Deuteronomy Vita & Mart. Sanct. c. 4.
- ft3 -- Deuteronomy Vita Proph. c. 14.
- ft4 -- Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 14. 2.
- ft5 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 7. and 8.
- ft6 -- Scripture Chronology, B. 6. c. 2. p. 646.
- ft7 -- Fol. 12. 1, 2.
- ft8 -- P. 55, 105. Ed. Meyer.
- ft9 -- Fol. 104.
- ft10 -- In Meyer. Anotat. in ib. p, 626.
- ft11 -- **rj a rwdl** “posteritati sequenti”, Vatablus; “generationi posteræ”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.
- ft12 -- **tw[| tm** “molares”, Pagninus, Mercerus, Burkius.
- ft13 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.
- ft14 -- Idyll. 5.
- ft15 -- Nat. Hist. l. 17. c. 25.
- ft16 -- Deuteronomy Architectura, l. 2. c. 9. p. 70.
- ft17 -- **çybw h** “erubuit”, Tigurine version, Mercer, Liveleus; “puduit”, Drusius, Tarnovius; “pudefit”, Cocceius.
- ft18 -- **l l ma** “infirmatum est”, Montanus. So some in Vatablus.
- ft19 -- **hçybw h** “confusa est”, V. L. “pudefacta est”, Cocceius; “pudet”, Drusius.
- ft20 -- **yk** “ideo”, Grotius; “imo”, Piscator; “sane”, Mercer.

- ft21 -- **hrx[warq** “vocate retentionem”, Montanus; “proclamate diem interdicti”, Junius & Tremellius, Heb. “interdictum”, Piscator; “edicite coetum cum cessatione”, Cocceius.
- ft22 -- **ydçm dçk** “uti vastitas a Deo vastatore”, Drusius.
- ft23 -- Deuteronomy Plantatione Noe, p. 237.
- ft24 -- **twdrp** “grana”, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Bochartus. So Ben Melech, who observes they are so called, because they are separated and scattered under the earth.
- ft25 -- **twrxa** “thesauri”, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Vatablus, Piscator.
- ft26 -- **çybwħ** “confusum est”, V. L. “puduit”, Drusius; “pudore afficit”, Cocceius.
- ft27 -- **rbdm** “non tantum desertum significat sed et campum sativum”, Oecolampadius. “A place of pasture for cattle”, Ben Melech.
- ft28 -- **twan** “caulas”, Piscator. So Ben Melech.
- ft29 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.
- ft30 -- Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 5. p. 479.
- ft31 -- “Postera vix summos spargebat lumine montes Orta dies----”, Virgil. Aeneid. 12.
- ft32 -- Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 5. p. 474, 475.
- ft33 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 48.
- ft34 -- Travels, p. 420. Ed. 2.
- ft35 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.
- ft36 -- **rwrap** “fuliginem”, Montanus; “luridum ollae colorem”, Tigurine version, Tarnovius; “ollam pro nigore ollae”, Drusius.
- ft37 -- **µtj ra ^wj b[y al** “non interrogabunt [isti ab illo] de semitis suis”, some in Vatablus, and others in Kimchi and Abendana.
- ft38 -- **wtl smb** “per aggerem suum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “via

elevata”, Drusius; “via strata sua”, Cocceius.

- ft39 -- w[xby “verbum significat discidit”, Amos ix. 1. Tarnovius, so Ben Melech.
- ft40 -- j l ç d[b “per missile”, Cocceius; so Bochartus, Castalio, Drusius, Burkius; “super missile”, Montanus.
- ft41 -- “Non avari erunt”, Montanus; “nec lucro inhiant”, Tigurine version; “non studebunt avaritiae”, so some in Vatablus.
- ft42 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.
- ft43 -- Ibid. (Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.)
- ft44 -- Ibid. (Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.)
- ft45 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 26. 2.
- ft46 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. sect. 2, 4. Schulchan Aruch, par. 2. Eben Hezer, c. 55. sect. 2, 3.
- ft47 -- R. Elias Levita, Tishbi in hpj p. 119.
- ft48 -- ^ [yw “et respondit”, Piscator, Drusius, Burkius.
- ft49 -- Vid. T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1.
- ft50 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.
- ft51 -- twç[l l ydgh yk “quamvis magna gesserit”, Gataker.
- ft52 -- “Quia magnifica Jehovah agit”, Junius & Tremellius; “aget”, Piscator, Liveleus, Castalio.
- ft53 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 2.
- ft54 -- hqdxl hrwmh “doctorem justitiae”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Munster.
- ft55 -- “Doctorem ad justitiam”, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Castalio, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius.
- ft56 -- Travels, tom. 2. par. 2. c. 1. p. 335. Ed. 2.
- ft57 -- Ib. tom. 1. part 3. sect. 2. p. 137.

- ft58 -- Ib. tom. 2. part 2. c. 2. sect. 3. p. 377.
- ft59 -- **μkl ytml ḥw** “et rependam vobis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Tarnovius; “compensabo”, Grotius, Cocceius.
- ft60 -- **l wka μtl ka** “comedetis comedendo”, Pagninus, Montanus; “ceras”, Vatablus, Piscator, Tarnovius.
- ft61 -- Zohar in Numb. fol. 99. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 219. 2. Debarim Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 242. 2. Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 9. 3. R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 51.
- ft62 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.
- ft63 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 32.
- ft64 -- Vid. Joseph. Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 6. c. 5. sect. 3.
- ft65 -- **ḥ[twrmt** “palmas fumi”, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft66 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 947.
- ft67 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 19. p. 271.
- ft68 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 1. 3. c. 5. p. 75.
- ft69 -- Hist. Heb. 1. 6. c. 27.
- ft70 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 4. c. 5. sect. 4.
- ft71 -- Massaot, sive Itinera, p. 44.
- ft72 -- Deuteronomy locis Hebr. fol. 92. C.
- ft73 -- Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 103, 106. Ed. 7.
- ft74 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanctae, p. 172.
- ft75 -- Written about 1750. Editor.
- ft76 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 6. c. 9. sect. 3.
- ft77 -- **μkyl kyhl** “in palatia vestra”, Montanus, Drusius, Burkius.
- ft78 -- Antiqu. 1. 13. c. 5.
- ft79 -- Arriam. de Exped. Alexand. 1. 2. c. 24.

- ft80 -- Geograph. l. 16. p. 536.
- ft81 -- Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 179, 180.
- ft82 -- Ibid. p. 181.
- ft83 -- Comment. in Jessiam, c. 43. 3.
- ft84 -- Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 23.
- ft85 -- In Catena Graec. Patr. apud Spanhem. Hist. Jobi, c. 3. p. 47.
- ft86 -- **wdr** **πατεiτε**, “calcate”, Sept. so Syr. Ar.
- ft87 -- **urj h qm[b** “in valle triturationis”, Piscatsr.
- ft88 -- **hsj m** “refugium”, Tigurine version, Burkus; “receptus”, Tarnovius.
- ft89 -- **w[m** “prsesidium”, Tarnovius; “arx”, Cocceius.
- ft90 -- **çdq** “sanctitas”, Munster, Mercerus, Vatablus, Piscator, Tarnovius.
- ft91 -- Epitome Divin. Institut. c. 11. Vid. Institut. l. 7. c. 24.
- ft92 -- “Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva, Et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella”. Virgil. Eclog. 4. l. 29, 30.
- ft93 -- “Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant, Flavaque de viridi stillabant ibice mella”. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1.
- ft94 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.
- ft95 -- Itineranium, p. 44.
- ft96 -- Travels, c. 3. p. 444, 459. Ed. 2.
- ft97 -- Vid. Relaud. Palestina Illustrata, l. 1. c. 54, p. 351, 352.
- ft98 -- **pyj çh l j n ta** “vallem cedrorum lectissimorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius.
- ft99 -- Scholia in Targum in loc.
- ft100 -- **hwbyw** “even I the Lord”, margin of our Bibles.